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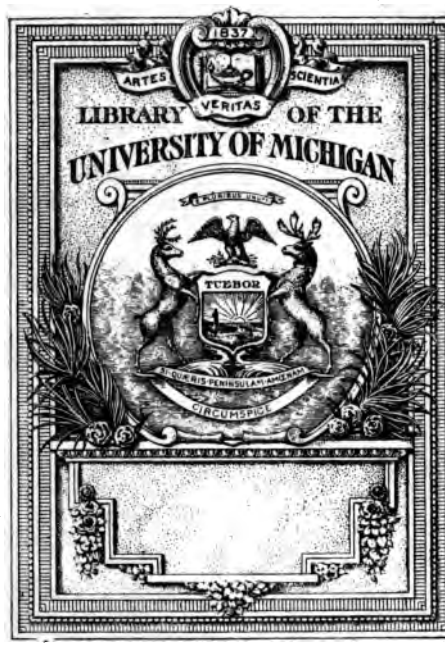

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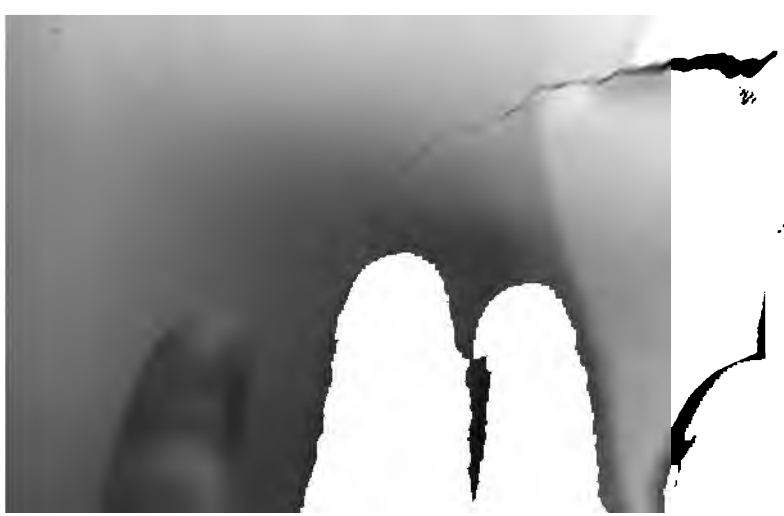

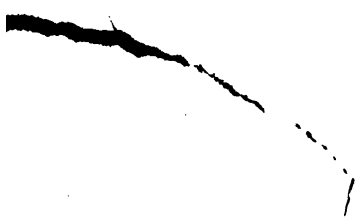

DON'T WORRY

(WORRY: THE DISEASE OF THE AGE)

BY

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(F.R.S. EDIN.)
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DON'T WORRY

(WORRY: THE DISEASE OF THE AGE)

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WORRY

I

ITS SIGNIFICANCE

OUR "being's end and aim" is happiness — not necessarily the material happiness of the inebriate or the epicure, but happiness of some kind, having its highest form in the spiritual exaltation of those rare souls who, in this world of shadows and half-lights, have seen a vision and follow the gleam. Thus to worry is to miss the purpose of one's being: it is to fail — to fail for self, to fail for others, and it is to fail gratuitously. "It is worse than a crime, it is a blunder"; but the blunder is almost universal, and is the characteristic symptom of an age, which — the *laudator temporis acti* notwithstanding — I believe to be the greatest in human history hitherto. To the evolutionist no other belief is open.

"What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! . . . in apprehension how like a god!" Certainly none has a greater right to praise him than his greatest poet. But alas, how significant is the change in meaning of one of Hamlet's words. When Shakespeare wrote "apprehension," he

meant *understanding*, but to us, three centuries later, the word means *worry!* To worry, indeed, is human: my concern may be with my butcher's bill or with the threatened extinction of the sun; I may worry for myself or for my child or for my creed, but worry, it would seem, I must; and yet happiness is my being's end and aim.

Good and evil, we know, are complementary. To love implies the possibility of hate; to look before and after, to anticipate, to hope, implies the possibility of fear.

"Yet if we could scorn hate and pride and fear," we should live upon a new earth. And men *have* scorned these things; they have known "that content surpassing wealth, the sage in meditation found, and walked with inward glory crowned." The wise of all ages have been the captains of their souls. Of these wise, the wisest few have founded great religions which — their substance, not their form, accepted — have redeemed many generations, and wiped the tears from many eyes. Even pagan stoicism has some claim to be counted with these. In our own time, as in all preceding times, there is necessity, but in our own time it is pre-eminent necessity, for the irradiation amongst the peoples of that fine temper, half philosophic, half religious, half intellectual, half emotional, half rational acceptance, half faith — the faith of Socrates that to the good man no evil thing can happen — the temper that possessed the soul of Wordsworth, who, whilst others were distressed, dis-

heartened, at the betrayal of a patriot, addressed him in these great words:

> "There 's not a breathing of the common wind
> That will forget thee; thou hast great allies;
> Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
> And love, and man's unconquerable mind."

In the succeeding chapters it is my purpose adequately to demonstrate, if possible, the importance of worry and of its acuter form, which we call fear; to seek for an analysis of its causes; and, more especially, to discuss the means by which it has been controlled, cured, or transfigured in the past, and which, well directed and employed, may perform a like service for us and our heirs.

The wisest thinkers of all times have seen that worry, apprehension, and fear condemn the many to futility, to real or imaginary disease, to premature death, to everything that is the negation of abundant life. But it is only quite lately that the double aspect of the importance of worry has been capable of due recognition. It is indeed easy to assert in a philosophic way that since it is well to be happy, it is ill to fret or fear; but what has not been sufficiently recognised is the importance of worry, not merely in itself as implying the absence of happiness, but as the cause of ills far greater than itself — the cause predisposing to disease which would otherwise have been escaped altogether; the cause determining the fatal issue of illnesses which would otherwise have been recovered from; a potent cause, probably the most im-

portant of all causes, of sleeplessness; a great consumer of the bodily energies, both directly and by reason of its effect upon sleep. This brief list is very far from exhausting or even adequately suggesting the physical consequences of worry. It is quoted merely as some indication of the influence of the mind upon the body, an influence which has always been credited, and which unfortunately has given rise to innumerable mysticisms and superstitions, but which has only lately, only indeed since the destruction of materialism thirty years ago, been elevated to the rank of a scientifically appraised truth. Worry, then, is not only a disease in itself, it is the precursor or predisposing cause of many bodily diseases, as also of many mental disorders of far greater gravity than its own. But this disease, hitherto deemed unworthy of serious consideration, is not only potent in influencing the health and happiness and accomplishments of those whom it affects, but those whom it affects are the entire community, with very rare exceptions. I have said that the wise of all ages have been the captains of their souls — the masters of their fate. But the wise of any age are the minority, the numerically insignificant minority. Very few of us have time for reflection, for philosophic meditation. The overwhelming majority of men and women are unable, usually through no fault of their own, to free themselves from this ailment — an ailment which, as we shall see when we come to consider its causes, is an all but inevitable con-

sequence of the supreme characteristic of the human mind, the power of contemplating itself, the past and the future. This is thus an ailment which plays a more or less malign part in almost every life. The variations of its influence are very wide, depending largely upon differences of what we vaguely call temperament. But I question whether there is any life in which it does not have some say. One man it may merely prevent from the full enjoyment of his work and play. Another man it hurts rather in interfering with the quality of his work, causing him to make mistakes due to over-anxiety or want of sleep. In another case it interferes with the sum total of a man's output; in yet another and a very frequent case, it interferes with his domestic happiness or his sociability, making him an irritable husband and father and an unloved guest. But it would be absurd to attempt to discuss here in detail the multitudinous consequences of worry or to insist upon their many ramifications. Merely I would insist at the moment upon the importance of worry, afterwards to be demonstrated, not so much in the melancholic nor in persons having vast responsibilities nor at the great crises of life, but rather its importance as a common, constant, commonplace fact, influencing body and mind, in greater or less degree, throughout the lives of the ordinary people with ordinary affairs, who constitute the overwhelming bulk of humanity.

I have therefore deliberately avoided the more

obvious of the two logical arrangements which my chapters might display. I propose to deal not first of all with the causes of worry and then with its consequences and cure, but first of all with its consequences, incidentally with its causes, thereafter with its cure. This order, however, may be logically defended; it corresponds to the defining of your subject before you expatiate upon it. First of all, we must know what worry is and what it signifies to human life; then, since its curableness is a matter of history, we must observe the modes in which men have cured it, and consider how their experience may serve our own need. Also, we shall consider the more abstract problem — a problem in pure psychology — of the causation of worry. From some points of view this is the most interesting question of all, but it is interesting only because we know how much worry signifies, and so our discussion of it need not come first.

In seeking the fundamental, though not the only cure for worry, our guide, I believe, will be the closing lines, which I have quoted, of the sonnet to Toussaint L'Ouverture. Mind and body, as we shall see, are inextricably one, and yet are not identical. Primarily, worry is a mental fact, and is to be dealt with by mental, not material, means, by dogmas rather than by drugs.

They must be true dogmas, else they cannot survive the onslaught of "man's unconquerable mind." Yet again, our philosophy must recognise that the soul of man has more than its intellec-

tual component; it has "exultations, agonies, and love." These, as well as our mind, our emotions as well as our reason, are our friends, if we will have them. We shall cure worry neither at the cost of our intellectual chastity, as by cozening ourselves to believe that which we know to be untrue, nor by striving to effect our end with the aid of the dry light of reason alone, casting scorn on the emotional nature. If we are to live completely and throw worry to the dogs, we must honour and recognise our complex nature in its completeness. The stoicisms have failed because they denied the emotions, and the emotionalisms have failed because they were opposed to man's mind and the truth which it worships. The cures that have endured, the optimisms that have survived, are those which have affronted no essential part of human nature, the sufficient vindication for *both* aspects of which, the intellectual and the emotional — for the evolutionist, at any rate — is the fact of their survival, their survival with increase, their triumph indeed, after the supreme test imposed upon them for countless ages by the struggle for existence.

II

THE CONSEQUENCES OF WORRY

He that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast. — PROV. XV., 15.

The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
— Paradise Lost.

THE supreme and unique character of the mind of man is self-consciousness. This it is which, as Hamlet says, makes him a being of "such large discourse, looking before and after." If he loses it, he ceases to be human. Thus, at bottom, the cause of worry is life: its cure is death. To live is to care, and therefore necessarily, at times, to live is to worry. But the end of life is happiness, whether for self or for others, and therefore worry, fear and care, though inevitable, are in direct opposition to the end for which we live. For what do they count in human life?

The two quotations, one ancient and one modern, which I have placed at the head of this chapter, indicate clearly enough what must necessarily be the case — that the importance of the mind and of the manner in which it looks upon life has been recognised by the wise of all ages. Before we attempt to classify the various states of mind which

we are to study: before we consider whether there is any worry that may be called normal and necessary, or study the worry that is the product of disease, or ill-health, or the worry of which disease is a product, — let us first ask ourselves what this fact of worry signifies in human life in our own age and civilisation.

I have called it the disease of the age. This is by no means to assert that worry is not, when widely defined, a disease of every age. But if we consider the psychological condition — self-consciousness — upon which the possibility of worry depends, we shall see that, as evolution advances, as man becomes more civilised and more thoughtful, as he comes to live less in the present, more in the past, and yet more in the future, as his nervous system undergoes a higher organisation, becomes more delicate and sensitive — in a word, as man becomes more self-conscious and therefore more human, so he becomes more liable to that disease of the mind which is certainly unique in this respect, that, alone of all human diseases, there is no analogy to it whatever in the case of any of the lower animals.

Every access of civilisation increases the importance of this malady. Printing must have multiplied it a hundredfold; cities, with their pace and their competition and their foul air, have done the like — and we are all becoming citi-fied, if not civilised to-day. I write not for the easy-going bucolic who, happy fellow, takes no thought for the

morrow, realising that sufficient unto the day are the evil and the good thereof; nor do I write for any other whom the swirling tide of the evolutionary struggle has passed by, to lead a quiet life — quiet but insignificant for the future of the race — far from the madding crowd. I write for those to whom the struggle for existence is a stern necessity — those who have others dependent upon them: those who fear forty and grey hair, and death and consumption and cancer; and, beyond all these, "the dread of something after death." And I submit that worry is pre-eminently the disease of this age and of this civilisation, and perhaps of the English-speaking race in particular.

We do well to be "strenuous," we do well to "strive and agonise," we do well to know the discontent that is divine, that precious seed of insurrection, of which all progress is the fruit. We do well to think of the morrow. Far be it from me to suggest that we should emulate the modern Spaniard or Greek or Italian. To renounce the struggle for life is not really to live, but to vegetate. But we must pay the price — and indeed we are doing so.

Year by year, worry and fear and fretting increase the percentage of deaths that are self-inflicted — surely the most appalling of all comments upon any civilisation. Year by year, men and women show their need for psychic help by the invention of new religions, every one of which, in so far as it brings peace and content of mind,

has a serious claim upon the respect of the philosopher. Year by year we seem more steadily to lose our fathers' faith that "underneath are the Everlasting Arms." And we turn to Christian Science and the Higher Thought and Psycho-Therapeutics and Occultism and Materialism, or to sheer Epicureanism ("Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die") — to arms that are shortened and cannot save.

Meanwhile, all experts tell us that the struggle for existence is becoming too severe and is telling upon the mind of the race. In olden days men fought with their muscles or their teeth, directly and indirectly. The prizes of life and survival went to him who had the strongest teeth and the most vigorous digestion, or to him who was the fleetest or wiriest. Those who were beaten in such competition had indeed to do without the lion's share. But a beaten muscle is merely beaten: it is as good as it was, and probably better.

Not so with the beaten mind. Infinitely higher in organisation — or rather in the organisation of the nervous system on which it depends — the beaten mind is much more than beaten: it tends to undergo vital injury. Unlike a muscle, it can recognise or brood over its own loss or disgrace. "In ten years," says a prophet of evil, "the hospitals will be on the rates." He is a Cassandra, I fear — whose prophecies came true. Yet the death rate from the filth diseases falls every year. Thank goodness our wise fathers wisely worried over

sanitation. *Every condition, however, which eliminates the physical in the struggle for existence merely increases the importance of the psychical;* for there is no discharge in that war. Hence, the more we control infectious diseases and the like, the greater is the strain which we throw upon those psychical instruments with which the struggle for life is now waged. In olden days some could not stand the physical strain: they had to work long hours for poor gain and early graves. Nowadays many cannot stand the psychical strain. They are injured partly by fatigue, partly by worry. *It is a proved and accepted physiological truth that the adult is much more gravely injured by worry than by fatigue.* Hence our nerve doctors are kept busy. Hence the incessant discovery of new nervous diseases.

Of these, two explanations are possible. One is, that observers in the past were not acute and skilful enough to detect them. But this is on the face of it incredible. Men of the stamp of Sydenham had trained powers of clinical observation which probably no physician of the present day can rival. On the contrary, it is generally admitted that the introduction of new (and immensely important) methods into medicine, such as all those which depend upon the discovery of microbes, has gravely tended to lessen our skill in clinical observation. The only reasonable explanation of these new nervous diseases is that they *are* new. I believe that on this point Dr. Max Nordau is undoubtedly

correct. Their victims represent the consequences to society and to the individual of the increasing strain to which the nervous organisation of men is now subjected. And I repeat that the general truth, long recognised by wise men, that nothing kills so surely as care, has now received physiological confirmation. These patients are not the victims of over-work as such. I very much question whether mere mental over-work ever killed or injured anybody. Amid the chaos of error and fallacy which embodies the popular conception of insanity — as of all other subjects — we may find a fairly definite impression that mental "over-work" is the cause of much insanity and premature decay. Now let me assert, as dogmatically as words will permit, that this is the most arrant nonsense, unsupported by facts or logic. The case is simply not so. Do you beg to differ? Well, look up any text-book on insanity, or neurology, or make arrangements for studying the facts of asylums; thereafter you will agree with what is not an individual opinion of mine but a simple statement of scientific truth. Brain-work — as such — never killed or harmed anybody. Brain-work in a stuffy room will kill you of tuberculosis, brain-work plus worry has killed thousands, brain-work plus worry plus insomnia many thousands more, but if the brain-work had been omitted the impure air or the worry and the consequent loss of sleep would have had just the same result. If you are prepared to believe a simple assertion that

you hear or read this year, pray believe me, for this is a matter of personal, national and planetary consequence, as we shall see.

I have passed from nervous disease, as ordinarily understood, to insanity, but surely it scarcely needs to be said at this time of day that the transition is merely from one part of the same subject to another. Mental disease, in a word, is physical disease or nervous disease, and there is no mental disease that is not. If obscure paralyses and losses of muscular control or muscular co-ordination are increasing, so also, it must unfortunately be admitted, are diseases of the mind as that term is usually understood. For some years I have tried to do my share in attempting to relieve the public mind on this score. To infer that insanity was increasing, merely because the number of the certified insane was increasing, and increasing out of proportion to the natural increase of the population, was a worthless argument. A great measure of the apparent increase of insanity is only apparent — due to the fact that a larger proportion of the insane are nowadays certified as such and treated in asylums or homes. This results partly from increased public confidence in such places, partly from the increase in all varieties of accommodation. But, even when these considerations are fully allowed for, it appears to be certain that insanity is increasing amongst us. Recent articles on this subject in the *Times* have drawn very necessary attention to it. How, then, are we to ac-

count for the "growth of insanity"? — and even if it be not growing, it is by universal admission pre-eminently a disease of civilisation, and is already formidable enough in all conscience.

Unquestionably we must recognise that insanity is in no small measure a consequence or symptom of what I have called the disease of the age. But, without emphasising the obvious, I would pass on to consider those many causes of mental disorder which are not commonly looked upon or treated as cases of insanity. The medical profession knows these as "borderland cases." They exhibit neither sanity nor insanity as these terms are generally understood; but furnish living instances of the absurd fallacy which leads us to imagine that men can be classified like cheeses, into this brand and that. Between complete sanity and complete insanity there are all conceivable stages, and of all such stages many instances everywhere — whereas probably of complete sanity or complete insanity it would be difficult to find ten specimens in as many years. The most that can be said of many of us is, as Stevenson puts it, "Every man has a sane spot somewhere." The recognition of these borderland cases and of the problem which they present is urgently required by society; that their number is increasing, and rapidly, I suppose no one would dream of questioning. Without any desire to magnify my office or to seek for simple but false explanations, I am willing to assert that worry, directly and indirectly, plays an enormous and

constantly increasing part in the production of these cases.

Very commonly worry acts indirectly. The unfortunate seeks to drown his care in drink, to stifle it with morphia or to transmute it with cocaine. A noteworthy fact of the day is the lamentable increase of self-drugging, not only amongst men but also amongst women — the mothers of the race that is to be. Alcohol and morphia and cocaine, sulphonal, trional, and even paraldehyde; these and many other drugs are now readily — far too readily — accessible for the relief of worry and of that sleeplessness which, as a symptom of worry and as a link in the chain of lamentable events to which worry leads, must hereafter be carefully dealt with. These are friends of the falsest, one and all, as none know better than their victims. Hence borderland cases, misery, suicide, and death incalculable. There are no causes of worry so potent as foolish means for relieving it. To this vastly important matter I must return in a chapter devoted to it.

As the belief in dogmatic religion undergoes that decline which, whether for good or for evil, is unquestionably characteristic of our time, the importance of worry increases. A recent writer has shown how the increase in suicide is correlated with religious belief and disbelief. In European countries the proportion of suicide is least where the Greek and Roman Catholic Churches prevail, and highest amongst the Protestants. The num-

ber in Paris, as compared with those in all France, is enormous — "the irreligious city in a partially religious country. Italy and Spain are examples of less suicide in countries where Roman Catholicism yet holds her own, but Italy has begun to think while Spain remains priest-trammelled, and, therefore, the Italian average is twice as high. Germany and Switzerland, having very high numbers, may indicate the mental unrest in countries where two religions clash.

"Protestantism — a term here inclusive of Lutheran, Calvinist, and other forms — invariably has a high number as compared with Greek and Roman Catholic churches; this probably points to the dark and hopeless Calvinistic principle of predestination, and also to the need of guidance in mental disquietude, the divine touch of human sympathy, of which every soul at some time is in need, being met, more or less well, by the system of confession." [1]

But the increase of suicide is merely the most complete and important result of the decline of dogmatic religion as an antidote to worry. Many lives are blighted by doubt or sorrow or fear for which, five hundred years ago, the Church would have provided a remedy. Hence it is unquestionably true that the consequences of worry, both as an individual and a social phenomenon, become more apparent as men tend to pass further and further from beliefs and practices — such as pri-

[1] Miss C. F. Yonge, in the *International Journal of Ethics*.

vate and family prayer — against which worry has often been powerless to prevail in times past.

The consequences of worry in relation to ordinary physical disease are familiar to every physician. Not a few non-infectious diseases are known which seem frequently to be predisposed to by worry. Amongst these are gout, diabetes, and a certain form of goitre. My friend Dr. Schofield is of opinion that worry about cancer, in any particular site, may actually determine its occurrence there; but personally I am unable to share this opinion.

Directly we turn, however, to infectious diseases, the facts are seen to be evident and indisputable. All kinds of infection which depend upon lowering of the standard of general health are unquestionably predisposed to by worry. We know now that in the case of such a disease as consumption the microbe is encountered by every one. Those pass on unscathed who can resist it. That the bodily resistance is definitely affected by the state of mind — and notably, in the case of nurses and doctors, for instance, by the fear of infection — no one who is acquainted with the facts can for a moment question. In other words, worry about disease is a predisposing cause of disease, and so is worry about anything whatever. It is the repeated lesson of experience that, other things being equal, infectious disease tends to seize upon those who fear it and to pass over those who keep their flag flying. The nurse or doctor or relative who knows that the

disease is infectious, and who has always feared its name, does, in point of fact, more frequently succumb than he or she who takes no thought for self at all.

As a direct cause of the kinds of nervous disease which we call functional, worry is, of course, all-important. Many people cannot sleep because they worry about their inability to sleep. The more vigorously such persons set themselves to coax sleep — meanwhile becoming more apprehensive of failure — the more likely does failure become. The case is notoriously the same with nervous dyspepsia. Indeed, any part or function of one's body is apt to become disordered if we pay it too much attention. The higher part of the nervous system, that which is associated with consciousness, is wise when it leaves the lower levels to do their own business in their own way.

Hysteria in all its many forms seems to be increasing, and worry is one of its most potent causes. The patient has lost his or her power of volition. As Sir James Paget puts it, "the patient says 'I cannot'; her friends say 'she will not'; the truth is she cannot will." In other words, she has lost her self-confidence. But space does not at present avail for considering, at this moment, the value of self-confidence as an attribute of self-consciousness. Suffice it to observe that worry and self-confidence cannot co-exist.

If proof of the power of the mind in relation to hysteria and all forms of functional nervous dis-

ease be desired, the mere progress of Christian Science will provide it. Christian Science, which we must afterwards discuss, is increasing and is even threatening, as Mark Twain declares, to become the dominant religion, because it meets a real need. It teaches that to worry and to fear must be attributed all the ills that flesh is heir to. And this is true of such an amazing proportion of these ills that Christian Science cures them. The religion that has this kind of survival value will survive, and is quite independent of the good luck which I, for one, wish it. That the thing must be purged of quackery and of the lies with which it abounds is certainly true. But this must not blind us to a recognition of the great truth which, however unworthily Christian Science enshrines it, assuredly is as true as it was nineteen hundred years ago, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." That there is or may be a true religion, though I am a professed student of science, I do assuredly believe. Such a true religion will recognise, as religion ever has recognised with less or greater admixture of falsity, that faith is a supreme power.

The relations of religion and worry are most singular and striking. The true religion and the truths perceived by present and past religion are cures of worry and preventives of its consequences. On the other hand, many religions have been causes of worry, laying stress upon the sinfulness of sin, and the doctrine of future punishment, and immeasurably increasing the fear of death. Yet,

again, since we are here summarising the consequences of worry, we have to name religion itself, in many of its aspects, as one of these. I will venture on the generalisation that most religions show signs of having been produced in order to relieve and avert worry — whether about the past or the future, life or death, this world or the next. Many a mighty fane, many a mighty church, testifies to the means which man has consciously or unconsciously adopted in order to meet the needs created by his unique psychical characteristic, the recognition of the self, and of the past, and of the future.

For, after all, the worth of life is to be estimated, whatever materialists of a certain school may think, by one criterion alone. Human life is worth living, not in virtue of great discoveries or empires or banking accounts, or armies or navies or cities. "Only in the consciousness of individuals is the worth of life experienced": it may do for the ants and the bees to achieve mere social efficiency, but this, as such, is nothing in the eyes of self-conscious man. In the words of the Declaration of Independence, "every man is entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." When one dares to mention happiness as the end of life, foolish people commonly speak as if one were thinking of race-courses or low music-halls, or wine, or worse. But the word happiness, as used in the Bible and other classics, has no such base meaning — "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake happy are ye."

There is no human end but happiness, high or low. Its one absolute negation is neither poverty nor ill-health, nor material failure, nor yet starvation — "he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast." The one absolute negation of happiness is worry or discontent. A prosperous society, consisting of strenuous worried business men who have no time to play with their children, or listen to great music, or gaze upon the noble face of the sky, or commune with the soul from which we have quoted above, and of which another poet, Wordsworth, said that it was "like a star and dwelt apart" — such a society may be as efficient as a bee-hive, as large as London and as wealthy, but it stultifies its own ends, and would be better not at all. "Better is an handful with quietness than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit."

Such, in brief, are the main consequences of worry which, in a word, is the negation of all that makes life worth living. As I believe that life is worth living, or may be, I propose to consider the matter further hereafter.

III

WORRY AND PHYSICAL DISEASE

ONE should not use such a term as disease without an attempt to define it, and this I propose to do by as brief a description as possible of its opposite — *ease,* or health.

So accustomed are the majority of people to a standard of their own which custom has led them to regard as normal, that any plain statement of what constitutes real health will perhaps be regarded as too rigid and overdrawn. Nevertheless, it surely seems reasonable to assert something like the following as the condition of health. The reader will notice that I do not include any estimate as to the number of foot-pounds of work that a healthy man should be able to perform in a day, or as to the number of hours that he should be able to spend in intellectual labour. These things depend upon a thousand factors, varying in almost every individual. Of such variations my definition of health will take no heed. I am not satisfied with the definition of health as freedom from disease. That affords me no more visible enlightenment than the proposition that disease may best be defined as a departure from the state of health. But without drawing upon my imagination, or attempting to

set any standard that is not realised by many persons, I will offer some such description as the following, of the man whom I regard not necessarily as robust or energetic, but merely as well. My concern here is not with what we call rude health, but merely with health.

When the healthy man wakes in the morning he should have no recollection of any state of partial or entire consciousness later than, say, half an hour after he went to bed the night before; that is to say, his sleep has been unbroken, continuous, complete: if he has had any dreams at all, he has, at any rate, no recollection of them. This is the kind of sleep that refreshes a healthy animal, and that is possible for a healthy man. The sleep that is broken or that is not readily attained when the hour comes and light is banished, is so, not because it is in the inherent nature of human sleep to be broken, but because there has been too much strain, either upon the brain or the stomach, or both, before sleep was sought. We need say no more upon this subject at present. Having waked as one really should do, because one has slept enough, and not because it is time to get up, and an earlier riser has told one so — the healthy man wants to be up and doing. That is a sign of health which I admit very nearly entails an effort of my imagination. Nevertheless, this should be so. One should wake because one has slept long enough and should no more want to lie abed than one wants to be in prison. The healthy man's next business is to per-

form his toilet without delay, for he is hungry, and has visions of breakfast. This over, his concern, like that of the two kings in the "Gondoliers," is to proceed without delay to the business of the day. This business may be great or small, mental or physical, long or short; but he leaves it with a surplus of energy, in disposing of which by a happy paradox he recreates himself. I will not dogmatise as to whether he should walk, or play with his children, or read; but I am sure that the healthy man has more energy to dispose of every day than he is compelled to dispose of. At some time or other during the day he indulges in work or play of his own choosing. If, like most of us, he has compulsory work, and leaves it ready only for dinner and bed, he cannot hope to answer to my description, for he is over-worked, and if over-worked he cannot be healthy. His work done, and contented with his recreation, my model man goes to bed. I have already said how long he takes to get to sleep, and what sort of sleep it is that he gets. During the whole of his conscious day his health has been marked not only by positive achievement, but by certain negations. Bored he may have felt, perhaps, but never weary. He has had no pains of any kind, neither headache nor backache, nor any other. Throughout the entire day, he has been totally unconscious of his own person and of all its parts, save incidentally, as when washing and dressing. He has never once thought about his digestion, and all the informa-

tion that he can afford on that score would amount simply to this: that at intervals during the day he deposited certain pleasant materials in the largest aperture of his face, but that of their subsequent history he has no record whatever. As for his tongue, he does not remember ever having seen it.

The reader will freely grant, I fear, that if this be health, there be many who know it not. Yet after all, I have described nothing that is not possible, nothing that requires a unique brain, or Herculean muscles, or even exceptional inherited vigour. The question arises for every individual, how much work he is capable of doing whilst at the same time conforming to this standard. One may be able to do only four hours' work without defect somewhere in sleep or digestion or internal sensations. Another man regularly does three times as much. But whatever the amount of work the man does, he is certainly departing from health if his daily history does not answer to my description.

Now, when there is set a standard so severe, yet after all so entirely reasonable, we begin to realise the enormous total measure of ill-health — chronic continuous ill-health — that is to be found in any civilised community of to-day. Perhaps the majority of the people who suffer are unconscious of their disability. Many of them have known no other state since they were children, and have come to regard their present state as normal and not unsatisfactory. Nevertheless their health is imper-

fect, and though they may continue for years in such a state, and though it may by no means evidently shorten life, yet it alters the whole complexion of the lives of only too many. Evidently, therefore, we must return to this subject when we come to consider the Physical Cures of Worry. Having recognised the existence of minor ill-health as one of its most important causes, we must consider whether this cause cannot be removed (see Chap. XVIII., "The Physical Cures of Worry").

If the desirable state above described be health, it is little wonder that, as we know, the fear of disease is a kind of worry that has played a part in men's minds since the earliest times. The history of medicine was, until quite recent times, the history of a superstition, and the superstitious beliefs and practices to which worry about disease has given rise are without number. Of late years we have come to a rational understanding of disease, and the manner in which we worry about it has undergone corresponding modification. No longer do we conceive disease as hurled upon us by an avenging providence, nor by outraged and slighted divinity. Nor do we any longer believe in the evil eye, nor in the pestilent influence of bad air, such as has coined for us the name of the disease "malaria." Nowadays we universally accept the germ theory of disease. We know that an overwhelming proportion of all disease is due to the fact that the world is inhabited by a host of invisible creatures, many of which have need of

man's body as their host and diet. We believe that these creatures are not generated in the body, but enter it from without; and we see that our business, if we would be free from disease, is to obviate such entrance, which we call infection. We thus have a very definite process to worry about, and only too many must do so to much purpose.

The purpose served, however, is not our own, but that of the microbes which we fear. Let us consider the curious but true proposition that worry about a given disease may be the deciding factor whereby it is enabled to attack and even to slay us.

When first the microbic origin of disease was discovered, the problem of infection seemed to be a simple one; if you met the microbe you succumbed, if not you went free. But nowadays we know that the case is by no means so simple. The bacilli of tuberculosis are now known to be scarcely less than ubiquitous. They must repeatedly gain entrance to the throat and air passages of every city dweller. More alarming still, the discovery of the bacillus of diphtheria has led us to the remarkable conclusion that the immediate and exciting and indispensable cause of this terrible disease is apparently a normal inhabitant of the mouth and throat of many healthy people. Not so long ago this last proposition would have seemed to imply that such a bacillus could not possibly be the cause of this disease. But we are discovering that the microbe of pneumonia may similarly be found in the throats of healthy people. The doctors and

nurses who work in hospital wards containing cases of the three diseases I have mentioned and many others, are quite frequently found to have abundant supplies in their mouths and noses of the causal organisms.

It is plain, therefore, that there must be another factor than merely the presence of the seed in the production of any case of disease, and plainly that factor must be the suitability of the soil. The characters of the human soil in relation to any disease are expressed by the correlative terms, immunity and susceptibility. It is now known to be not enough that the seed be sown. It may die; it may be killed where it falls.

The whole problem of immunity is perhaps the most complicated and obscure in the whole field of the medical sciences. It varies in different cases according to a thousand circumstances; age, race, temperature, diet, habits, previous attacks, the strain of microbes, and so on. Of these circumstances there is one which, though of great importance, is entirely ignored by bacteriologists. I am not acquainted with any work on immunity — not even that which has lately been published by Professor Metchnikoff — wherein the importance of the mind in relation to infectious disease is duly recognised. It is true that experiment cannot be made upon this subject; it is true also that no exactitude can be hoped for in its study. But though we are confined to more or less casual observation, and though we cannot express these consequences

of mental state in terms of the reactions per kilogram of rabbit, we may be assured that the mind *does* play a most important part in determining whether or not an individual shall suffer from a given disease. Doubtless, infectious diseases may be divided for convenience into two classes. There are some, such as malaria in the case of the white man and measles in the case of every child, to which the individual must succumb, so soon as he encounters the microbes upon which they depend. In such cases we must admit that the influence of the mind, if it has any place at all, is practically negligible. But on the other hand, we know that there is a large number of diseases, susceptibility to which is determined by the general health, as we may conveniently if vaguely term it; so long as we conform to a certain standard of vigour we may harbour the tubercle bacillus, the diphtheria bacillus, and the pneumococcus in our mouths and suffer no harm. Doubtless they multiply but slowly, and live either upon one another or upon the secretions of the mucous membrane near which they lie; at any rate, they make no inroads upon the living tissues. But if there comes a chill or a bout of drunkenness, or an attack of influenza, or any other devitalising factor, the resistance of the individual is diminished, and he may well fall before the attacks of microbes which he has housed for months without hurt. In the case of such diseases, then, it would appear that it is simply the general vitality or lack of vitality that determines immunity or susceptibility.

The reader will draw for himself the obvious conclusion. If there be diseases which depend for their instance upon failure of general health — the exciting microbic causes being unable to act save with the co-operation of predisposing causes — then it is plain that any factor which lowers the general health may turn the scale in favour of the attacking forces. Now, if there is one fact more indisputable than another, it is that worry is able to weaken the bodily defences. It was care that killed even the nine-lived cat.

Whenever it is possible, I dearly love to support a proposition by distinct lines of argument — the argument which asserts that the proposition must be true because it necessarily follows from other propositions assumed to be true, and the more properly scientific argument that the proposition is true because when we come to look at the facts they confirm it. Now by the first or *a priori* method, we have already convinced ourselves, I think, that if the accepted theories of disease be correct, worry about disease must necessarily be a predisposing cause of disease. But it is also possible to quote the evidence of experience and observation in support of this proposition.

I must insist upon the manner in which I have qualified this statement. It is impossible to assert that lack of fear will protect an unvaccinated person from smallpox. In such a case, immunity and susceptibility depend not at all upon the general health. but exclusively upon the circumstance

whether the threatened individual has or has not previously suffered from the disease or any of its modifications. The *rôle* of worry in the causation of infectious disease is confined entirely to those diseases which depend for their power upon failure of general health. Worry acts not in any mystical fashion, but merely in virtue of its effect upon general vitality, and if the state of the general vitality be irrelevant, as it appears to be in the case of a large number of diseases, then worry must count for very little, one way or another. This admission does not at all prejudice the fact that in a very large number of instances worry counts for a great deal in this connection.

But when we have exhausted the consideration of worry and fear in relation to diseases of microbic origin, we are very far indeed from having reached the end, for we have yet to consider the innumerable diseases or disordered conditions of the nervous system, and these, as might be expected, are profoundly affected by worry.

It must not be supposed that all we have here to say is simply that if one worries long enough about a nervous disease the worry will be justified at last. For, let us take the instance of the modern curse of sleeplessness. It is the fact that worry about sleep, as distinguished from worry about one's affairs, is in itself sufficient only too often to cause a sleepless night. In attempting to control a case of sleeplessness, nothing is of more importance than, if possible, to restore the patient's con-

fidence in his power to sleep. Only too many people, whose sleep tends to be uncertain, begin to worry about their prospects directly they get into bed, and their apprehension *justifies itself*.

The case is the same with many other nervous functions, as, for instance, digestion. The more conscious attention one pays to it, the less likely is it to succeed.

Indeed, we may now recognise a general truth which is of very great psychological interest: that, in general, those bodily processes and functions which are under the control of the lower levels of the nervous system are best performed when those lower levels are left undisturbed by orders from above. This is true, not only of such functions as sleep and digestion, but also of other functions which, at one time in the history of the individual, have required the most direct and painstaking efforts of conscious attention. This is conspicuously true of various games and arts. When playing billiards, for instance, the trained organism may be trusted to perform simple strokes, almost automatically. If the player begins to devote too much attention to them, he is the more likely to fail. But the most conspicuous instance of my proposition is furnished by singing. It is the common experience of, I suppose, every singer that he is capable of attacking and sustaining without difficulty, provided that he be unaware of their pitch, notes which, as a rule, he does not dare to essay. A bass singer knows, for instance, that his upper

limit of comfort is E; if he knows that there is an F coming he begins to worry about it, and often pays the penalty. But if a song which he usually sings in E major be played for him without his knowledge in F, he will take the upper tonic with ease, simply because he thinks it is E. Similarly, in the case of variations in pitch between different pianos; if one has a piano of the sensible French pitch one does not venture on an F, but will easily take an E elsewhere, though as a matter of fact it is almost identical with the F, on which one never ventures at home.

This suffices to illustrate the proposition that *excess of attention* — and this is an accurate definition of certain kinds of worry — interferes at least as markedly as carelessness with the performance of many subconscious or semi-automatic acts. In the case of sleep and digestion, we cannot pay too little attention. In the case of organised compound acts, like violin playing and singing, a measure of attention is necessary, but directly that measure is exceeded and the consciousness becomes too eager (which means that it begins to worry) failure is imminent. But every one who knows anything about executive art or sport knows the difference between performing with confidence and without it.

This digression will suffice abundantly to prove that the behaviour of the nervous system, whether in relation to the necessary functions of life, or to its arts and sports, is capable of very great

modification by means of the mere direction of consciousness thereto. In its popular meaning, the word *self-consciousness* precisely signifies that excess of attention to self, always with the emotional tone of apprehension or worry, which so often leads to failure. "Nervousness" again, in its popular meaning, implies a similar emotional tone, and we all know its consequences. Now, if we once admit the fact that the functions of the nervous system are somehow modifiable by the mere direction of consciousness to them, it must necessarily follow that worry about any nervous function may cause disease. Such disease, for convenience, we may call a disease of function or a functional disease, and in point of fact the distinction between organic and functional nervous diseases is everywhere recognised by neurologists. From every point of view, practical and theoretical alike, the distinction is one of the first importance, and we cannot begin to make any progress in our study of the relations of worry to disease until we have the clearest possible conception of the difference between these two great classes of nervous disorder.

With the general structure of his nervous system the reader is doubtless familiar. A cerebro-spinal axis, consisting of brain and spinal cord continuous with it; a series of nerves passing to and from all but the highest portions of this axis; and a broad division of nervous tissues into cellular or grey matter, and conducting or white matter, every such conducting fibre being really a

linear continuation of a nerve cell — these are the outline facts of the nervous system. It is a material structure or complex of structures, to be handled, seen, or eaten, as in the case of the brain of the calf. And though the anatomy of the nervous system is a matter for many volumes, we may say that, even in the minute anatomy of the nerve cell, there is nothing which does not or might not conceivably yield to patient and expert study. As far as the anatomist is concerned, the nervous system of a Shakespeare or a Newton is simply so much matter arranged in a certain way. However complex the arrangement, there is nothing in it which suggests itself to be inherently insoluble.

Nor does the morbid anatomist or pathologist find anything at which his intellect chokes in his study of the nervous system. He simply finds matter in the wrong place: a clot of blood pressing a volitional tract and causing paralysis or speechlessness; a thickened projection of bone pressing upon a certain area and depriving it of its function; a fluid accumulation in the cavities of the brain causing a hydrocephalus — and so on. You may spend a lifetime on this study and be a learner at the end of it; but you will never be brought up sharply at a problem the terms of which you cannot even frame. Your difficulties, like those of the anatomist proper, are at any rate never unthinkable.

Of these "gross lesions" of the nervous system, then, much is definitely known. They are responsible for what we call organic disease of the ner-

vous system, meaning thereby that there is some matter of some sort out of place in the material organ of our study. And to cure the malady you must re-arrange the matter involved, in the normal way. This you may roughly do in a few instances — as by the removal of a tumour of the brain. This may be difficult or impossible; but the problem presents no inherent difference from that of the watchmaker when, let us say, some dirt has got into a watch. It is simply a question of altering the position in space of certain portions of matter.

In contrast with all the organic diseases of the nervous system, the neurologist recognises an indefinite number of other maladies which he calls functional. Morbid anatomy, aided even by the microscope and chemistry, reveals nothing in such cases. There is no organic change to be discerned, but there is disorder of function, which may be, and often is, quite as grave as that done by a structural change which you could see ten yards away, were it exposed.

Typical of these functional maladies — the number of which appears to be constantly undergoing addition in civilised communities — is the protean disorder which is called hysteria. Despite etymology, hysteria is met with in both sexes and at all ages. It is a reality, to be confused with malingering or shamming only by those who know nothing of it. Though nothing does the hysterical patient more harm than sympathy, he is as much entitled to it as if he had a cerebral tumour as big

as your fist. But, though to assert the reality of hysteria or any other functional disease of the nervous system is easy, to define its nature is, in the last analysis, not only impossible, but as impossible as it is to define the relation of mind and matter — the unknowable, unframeable, unthinkable problem. The physician may glibly say of his patient's malady, "Oh, it is only functional" — but he has not solved the ultimate problem with that phrase.

We cannot believe, indeed, that any "functional" malady is not the symptom of an organic or material change — a change too subtle for any of our methods. That we may hold as a pious belief; but we possess, with a very different conviction, the knowledge that in the cure of the two classes of nervous malady there is a difference as profound as the difference between mind and matter. This may readily be shown.

You have before you two persons who are unable to move the right arm — the inability in the two cases being identical. The first is a case of organic disease. You remove the tumour which is pressing on the arm area on the left side of the patient's brain, and he regains the use of his arm forthwith. The expert who removes an obstacle to the movement of your watch performs a precisely comparable operation. But the second patient has a functional paralysis. You will not cure him by altering the position in space of any portions of matter whatsoever. But if you act on his mind — as in the instance of the miracle wrought

on the Sabbath Day — and say, "Stretch forth thine hand," the paralysis is no more. In attempting to review an enormous subject in a few lines, I may therefore say that in all diseases of the nervous system — insanity of every kind included — a cure is conceivable by an *action on matter* or an *action on mind.*

The piles of crutches at Lourdes indicate real cures of real diseases. The cures wrought by Christian Science are real cures. Faith-healing is a fact. Neither faith nor Mrs. Eddy can remove mountains — or kill a bacillus — but mind can act on mind. Terrible maladies exist which the united wisdom of every physician on the earth might be impotent to affect, but which would yield instantly and finally to the nonsensical jabbering of an immoral imbecile, if only the patient's mind were affected thereby. These are scientific facts, as certain and as important as the infectiousness of cholera, the germ-causation of tuberculosis or the triumphs of Listerian surgery.

But my assertion of these facts will not delude any reader into forgetting the immeasurable distinction between a description and an explanation. The first we have already, the second would explain not only hysteria, but the cosmos in its entirety. If Tennyson could say as much of the flower in the crannied wall, it may certainly be said of an explanation which, in answering one question, would leave none unanswered.

Having thus attempted to define, as clearly as

possible, the difference between organic and functional nervous disease, we must now note some qualifying considerations which complicate the matter in practice. For instance, there is often found what we call a functional element superadded to cases of organic disease, as in the case of disseminated sclerosis of the brain and spinal cord. Such cases frequently deceive the physician, who is apt to regard the disease as entirely functional, because of the functional element which it displays, and because he is familiar with functional disorders which exactly simulate this disease. On the other hand, functional disorder by interfering with the general nutrition may lead to organic disease, and thus introduce the converse complication. Hence we find that in practice it is impossible to maintain any ultimate distinction between the two classes of disease.

We have already hinted that the distinction between malingering or shamming and hysteria is a real one. When the patient is pretending to be ill his disease is fictitious; when he suffers from hysteria we may describe it as factitious, but none the less real therefore. With fictitious disease we have here no concern at all.

I have just used the masculine pronoun, and the reader may think it out of place in relation to hysteria, but there is such a thing as male hysteria, and the derivation from the name of a distinctively feminine organ implies a libel upon the gentle sex. Doubtless hysteria is more common amongst wo-

men, but that is all that can be said. No real distinction can be maintained between the various forms of what it is usually agreed to call hysteria, and the countless other forms of functional nervous disease, and we may consider them all together indifferently. Now what are the relations of worry to the two classes of nervous disease?

We may say that worry does not directly cause organic disease. I cannot subscribe to the opinion that the organic disease (not nervous) called cancer may be induced in any organ by the constant fear of its occurrence there. Worry can only cause organic disease — such, for instance, as the bursting of a blood-vessel in the brain — indirectly by its influence upon general nutrition. On the other hand, worry may, and constantly does, cause functional nervous disease. We have already seen that worry about the possibility of disorder, such as sleeplessness, may induce the very disorder in question. But worry about anything, whether in this world or the next, is a potent cause of functional nervous disease. It is only consistent with this fact that such disease should be curable by mental influences. It may be fairly argued that, even in these cases, the worry may cause the disorder by its interference with appetite or sleep or both; but the manner of its operation is not so important as the fact that it does so operate.

We have already said that the distinction between organic and functional disease, all important though it be, cannot be universally maintained.

An instance of this is now furnished by the common disorder which goes by the good name of neurasthenia — the Greek for nerve weakness. This has gone by various names — general debility, nervous debility, nervous exhaustion, l'état nerveux, the vapours, and so on. It is unquestionably distinct from typical hysteria; yet on the other hand it is equally distinct from definite organic disease, such as that due to a tumour or a hæmorrhage, and it is curable in a way in which ordinary organic disease is not.

Both hysteria and neurasthenia are frequently caused by worry. In both cases, however, we have to recognise that worry, the exciting cause, cannot act without the help of a predisposing cause, which is very difficult to define, but which is undoubtedly a reality. It is a matter of inheritance, and we may call it inherited nervous instability, or the neurotic tendency; but if we use this word neurotic, we really must guard ourselves against attaching any unpleasant or sinister meaning to it. It is largely the neurotic people that do the work of the world, and fortunate are those who have the finely strung, delicately organised nervous system which that adjective indicates. This definitely asserted, we may go on to assert that worry can scarcely cause hysteria, neurasthenia, or any other functional nervous disease in people of the phlegmatic or even the average type. But it is, of course, the neurotic people who are temperamentally inclined to worry.

IV

WORRY IN ILLNESS

In the preceding chapter we saw the intimacy of the relations between worry and physical disease. We saw what the consequences of the fear of disease may be — consequences showing themselves in lowered resistance to the attacks of microbes on the one hand, and in the production of various kinds of nervous disease on the other hand. But now we must consider a further aspect of the same subject. Given a case of illness of any kind, what are the relations which worry about it will display?

I do not speak of worry on the part of friends nor yet on the part of the doctor; such worry, indeed, if it leads to care and judicious action, is normal, necessary, and useful. Indeed, we may say that it is in the patient's first interests that his friends and his doctor shall endure this vicarious worry. They should worry in order that he may not. For let us consider the consequences of worry in him.

Just as it is indisputable, however we choose to explain the facts, that worry may lower the resistance to an initial infection by microbes, so it is certain that when the infection has already occurred — that is to say, during the course of an illness due

to infection — its consequences will be markedly influenced by worry upon the part of the patient. At first, indeed, one is inclined to say that the best kind of patient is a dog or a cow. Here there is complete ignorance and complete lack of apprehension: things are simply taken as they come. There are not a few doctors who might well desire all their patients to be of this class — the more nearly vegetable the better.

But to admit this as a complete statement of the truth would be to see only one side of the question. These are certainly the best patients for those doctors who, whatever their other gifts may be, do not possess the supreme gift of the doctor, which is not scientific insight, nor power of diagnosis, nor knowledge of drugs, nor even the ability to work hard and forget nothing, but is *the power of enlisting the patient's mind upon the side of the forces that make for life and recovery.*

This power is one of the most remarkable and potent realities in the whole of medicine. It is not necessary that it should be exercised by the doctor; there may be something in the patient himself — some happy optimism, some religious faith, some determination to recover and finish his work, some "will to be well" which will serve the same purpose; or the power may be exercised by the friends or the nurse, and certain it is that the nurse is scarcely less important — if, indeed, she be not more important — than the doctor in this respect.

We may or may not possess a theory which serves to explain how it is that the mind of the patient is able to influence his recovery even from a disease which consists in the introduction of material, tangible poisons into his blood. For myself I think that a perfectly reasonable theory can be constructed. The more we study the processes of recovery, the more we are convinced that they depend, not upon the introduction of drugs from without, but upon the activity of forces within the body. This power of the body to heal itself has been recognised for ages under the name *vis medicatrix naturae* — the healing power of nature. In modern times we have come to discover that this power depends upon the ability of various organs in the body to produce protective and antidotal substances which destroy the poisons produced by microbes or even kill the microbes outright; such a substance may be produced in the liver or in the pancreas or in the bone-marrow or in the thyroid gland or elsewhere. But these tissues, like all others, are subject to the control of the nervous system. Their nutrition — upon which their activity depends — is absolutely at the mercy of the nutritive or, to use the technical term, the *trophic*,[1] influence which the nervous system sheds upon them by means of the special nutritive or trophic nerves that are distributed to every part of the body. If we clearly bear this mechanism in mind we can readily discern a rational explanation —

[1] Cf. the word *atrophy*.

perhaps here completely stated for the first time — of the manner in which the mind is able to control the processes of disease. We can readily understand that the trophic influence of the nervous system is diminished by worry and is multiplied by hope.

But really no theory matters in practice. Fascinating though the intellectual interest of the subject may be, the facts are the all-essential things, and they are independent of any theory. Somehow or other — though probably in the fashion I have described — the mind is a potent force whence may spring that healing power or force of nature whereby recovery from infectious disease is so frequently obtained.

Thus worry in illness directly makes for death — for it directly interferes, at their very fountain-head, with the forces that make for life. Now the history of the last fifty years is of the greatest interest in this respect.

Half a century ago, patients and doctors alike were deeply ignorant of the causes of disease and of the explanation of the symptoms which manifested themselves. Of the two, doubtless the patient was the more ignorant. Thus, in those days, there was little to induce him to keep any very close watch over his own condition. What he did closely observe, however, was — and still is — the manner of the doctor. That was certainly as it should be. Nowadays, however, most patients possess that little knowledge which is a dangerous

thing. Thus they want to know the why and the wherefore of everything; they show the deepest interest in their own chart and in every change in diet or medicine. Sometimes this tendency displays itself in the most ludicrous fashions, as in the case of a patient who consulted a well-known professor of surgery regarding a rupture, and breathlessly inquired whether it consisted of large intestine or small intestine. Again, cases are not infrequent nowadays where a patient practically dies with his finger upon his own pulse.

The question how this tendency should be met is at first sight a very difficult one to answer. The spread of physiological knowledge is undoubtedly beneficial on the whole. There are certain facts of very simple character, knowledge of which, if common to the general public, would create a public opinion able immediately to abolish a very large proportion of all disease. On the other hand, this physiological knowledge is often very far from beneficial to the individual sufferer.

Undoubtedly the true remedy, when it is available, is to be found in the personality of the physician. This was important enough fifty years ago, and its importance is greater now on account of several reasons. The first is that the physician has to reckon with a greater amount of average knowledge on the part of his patients; the said knowledge leading simply to useless worry. Again, the proportion of disease that is entirely nervous in origin and nature is yearly increasing in civilised com-

munities, and this is the kind of disease in which the personality of the physician, always a major factor, becomes almost the only factor of any importance. Yet again, the psychical type is undergoing a modification in the direction of increased self-consciousness and nervousness and increased remoteness from the vegetable.

The successful physician is born and not made — no, not by the finest curriculum in the world. It is true that the curative manner may be assumed and cultivated in a certain degree, but the value of such a manner can never equal that of the man in whom it is inborn and natural. The object of the wise physician is that the patient shall be directly the better for his visit *as such*. There should be something characteristic and conscious of power even in the way in which he knocks at the door or rings the bell. With him there enter hope and confidence. Of course the reader will readily understand, what only the born physician accomplishes in practice, that the manner must be adapted to the requirements of the individual patient. In not a few cases the physician will effect his end by a boisterous, hearty manner. He enters the room like a hurricane, and his tones can be heard all over the house. He treats every suggestion or complaint of the patient with gigantic and emphatic contempt. He gives the impression of brute force that will not be gainsaid. When he leaves, the patient feels that this man will *smash* the disease.

But a nervous, sensitive woman, whose ears are

liable to be injured by any but the lowest tones, would probably succumb at once to such a manner. In order to effect in her precisely the same consequences, the born physician will adopt quite a different manner. There is nothing artificial about this change, any more than there is anything artificial about the difference of manner you adopt in a drawing-room as compared with the dressing-room after a football match. The physician enters this room very quietly. He suggests power as he did in the last case; that is essential. But he does not suggest it by physical violence. He does not dump himself down on the edge of the bed, but quietly draws a chair to the patient's side. Whereas in shaking hands on the previous occasion he gave the impression that at a moment's notice he would be prepared to squeeze the hand off altogether, in this case his pressure is gentle though firm. Firm it must always be. The physician who places in his patient's palm a hand that suggests a dead fish would be better heaving coals. That sort of handshake will be quite sufficient to make a sensitive patient prepare for death. But in the case we are considering, the suggestion of power is conveyed by subtler means than the purely mechanical. The tones are low, sympathetic, clear. No question is ever repeated — a very characteristic fault which clearly shows that the physician has been thinking of something else instead of listening to the answer on the first occasion. The satisfactory statements of the patient or the nurse are received with evi-

dent pleasure but without surprise. The physician clearly shows that he expected nothing less.

But I need not spend more time upon this matter. Any observant reader is as familiar with these things as I am myself. The observant nurse, also, accustomed to working with a successful physician, will have noticed how in one case he is boisterous, in another subdued and grave, in another almost "oily": but how, by these varying means in every case he effects the same result — the transmission to the patient of a sense of power that is determined, confident, and irresistible.

The reader who has studied the modern views of such a disease as pneumonia or diphtheria, the invasion of the microbe, the manufacture of its poisons or toxins, and the production in the blood of antidotes or antitoxins, may doubt whether the physician's manner can have any bearing upon the issue of such a disease. To such a reader I would submit the theory advanced above of the fashion in which the personality of the physician may and does work for cure even in such cases. As for the reader who can recall a serious illness of his own, and who was fortunate enough to be attended by a physician or a nurse or both, whom nature predestined for this service — he is beyond the need of any remarks of mine.

The power by which the physician or the nurse affects the mind of the patient is known to psychologists as *suggestion*. We may define suggestion

as the influence exercised upon the body and its functions by the subtle power of ideas or of personality. The individual influenced may be wholly unaware of the occurrence; for the feature of suggestion is that it acts less upon the conscious part of the mind than upon the subconscious mind.

There are scarcely any limits to its power. It can kill outright, as in well attested cases, where, for instance, the joke has been played of blindfolding a schoolboy, telling him that he is to be beheaded, and then striking his neck, at the word of command, with a wet towel. In such circumstances a boy has been known to die instantly. It can cause unconsciousness, as when the nurse injects ten drops of a solution of common salt under the soporific name of morphia — and in a few moments the patient is asleep. It can determine immunity or susceptibility to infectious disease, as when the person who fears infection is struck down, whilst he or she who does not fear or does not care, escapes. That these things happen there is no possible doubt. That suggestion can produce or relieve pain every one knows. That it can produce subcutaneous hæmorrhages and severe ulcerations is proved by the cases of the "stigmata" of St. Francis and others.

If this thing be so potent, is it not worth our while to make more definite and intelligent acquaintance with it? Assuredly it is, for though the power of suggestion may certainly be exercised unconsciously, yet there is no question that

it is much more potent when the "suggester" deliberately determines to exercise what influence may be possible upon the mind of the subject.

And here is my point. The medical profession is only now beginning to discover that there is something to be learned from the Christian Scientists and their like. As for the nurse, it is only when she has been exceptionally fortunate that her full potentialities in this respect have been revealed to her by her tutors. But more and more — and especially since infectious disease will ever be a diminishing quantity, whilst the nervous system becomes of ever greater importance in medicine and therapeutics — the doctor will learn to use his personality judiciously.

Undoubtedly the doctor has this advantage over the nurse as a therapeutic mind — that he is supposed, in virtue of his skill, to hold the keys of life and death; but the nurse has other advantages. I believe that her sex is a great advantage, in the first place, — this, perhaps, more especially with male patients, — for the ill man has a sound organic instinct, which makes him lean upon a woman standing to him as his mother once stood. Again, the nurse has far more opportunities than the doctor; and the nursing instinct, in its highest manifestations, certainly includes the instinctive knowledge how to exercise suggestion.

I wish to insist upon the importance of these facts for the wise nurse, and my points are simply these: that suggestion is a reality of very great

importance in medicine, and that its importance tends to increase; that it may and should be exercised by the nurse, who is probably more important than the doctor as what I have elsewhere called a "therapeutic mind"; that at present the nurse is not explicitly taught the possibilities and functions of suggestion, and that she should be taught that the power may and often does turn the scale, even in cases of grave infectious or microbic disease, such as pneumonia; that it is much more efficient when consciously and deliberately exercised than when unconsciously; and that, in the not distant future, the systematic but diplomatic and subtle suggestion by the nurse to the patient of the probability of recovery, of the potency of his drugs, of the evanescent character of his pains, and of many facts more which will be facts if *only he believes,* will be recognised as amongst the essential and indispensable duties of the *complete* nurse.

Certain interesting facts are worthy of record in illustration of the theory that the influence of worry, and its opposite self-confidence, in illness is largely effected through the action of the nervous system upon the secretions of the body. Utterly impossible as it is for us to understand the relations of "mind and body," we may sometimes feel inclined, especially under the influence of the psychology of the present day, to the view that no purely mental state *can* affect the body: but a further study of psychology will teach us that there

is no purely mental state. Every mental state is associated with a physical state of the physical organ called the brain, and it is by this that further bodily results are made possible.

Recent study of the dog by the celebrated physiologist, Professor Pavlov (or Pawlow) of the Military Academy of Medicine, St. Petersburg, has shown that such influences occur even in the lower animals. It has been proved that the mere spectacle or lively expectation of food in a hungry dog causes active secretion not only of the saliva but also of the gastric juice. The phrase, "It made my mouth water," indicates our recognition of this amongst ourselves.

This instance, however, leads us to another, which is much more striking, and for which, as might be expected, we must have recourse to the case of man. It is a common practice in India, when some servant out of a large number is suspected of having committed a theft, to employ the influence of worry upon the body as a means of identifying the offender. The servants are all ordered into a room where they are publicly compelled to take a large mouthful of some very dry powder or the like. The problem is to swallow this, and it is the rule that the fear of detection and the consciousness of guilt completely arrest the secretion of saliva by the offender, so that he can readily be detected; for, unlike his innocent fellows, he cannot swallow his mouthful.

This well-known fact has only to be applied to

our consideration of the influence of worry in illness for us to recognise that this psychical state may gravely interfere with the production of those internal secretions in terms of which, as we have seen, the *vis medicatrix naturae* must now be expressed — at any rate, in large degree.

The same is true of fatigue. Now in many illnesses, such as pneumonia — there is no better or more frequent and serious instance — the practical problem is simply this — to keep the patient's heart going until the crisis is past. Heart failure at or immediately before the crisis is the actual cause of death in nearly all fatal cases of this extremely fatal disease; and the failure is due not merely to the fact that the muscular tissue of the heart is being poisoned, but also to the fact that it has been terribly hard worked owing to the interference with the circulation through the inflamed lungs. How, then, are fatigue and exhaustion of this vital organ to be averted? Partly, beyond a doubt, by a practical recognition of Shakespeare's couplet —

> "A merry heart goes all the day
> Your sad tires in a mile-a."

We do well to express courage by the phrase "a stout heart." If the patient says, "I *will not* die," or "I *will not* die until my son arrives to see me," or if he is *heartened*, as we well say, by faith, then his courage will avert heart fatigue, and his chances of surviving the crisis are increased. Many and many a time have doctors observed the amaz-

ing power of sheer determination and courage to keep a patient alive when all the hopes of his attendants have been abandoned.

But in order that we may see the subject "steadily and whole," it will be well for us to devote a special chapter to its broader aspects.

V

MIND AND BODY — IN HEALTH AND DISEASE

In 1873 there was published at Philadelphia a pioneer book, the full title of which was "The Influence of the Mind upon the Body in Health and Disease, designed to elucidate the action of the Imagination." The author was Dr. Hack Tuke, grandson of the founder of the Retreat, York, and himself a loyal servant of that institution, and later of Hanwell Asylum, London. His name is familiar to students of the mind-diseased everywhere. Copies of this remarkable book are nowadays hardly obtainable, but the wisdom of it is more than ever worthy of wide dissemination in these days when Christian Science, for instance, is compelling the attention of the medical profession to truths too long left for exploitation by charlatans.

In his "Anatomy of Melancholy," Burton very well states the two aspects of the relation between mind and body in disease: —

"Some are molested by Phantasie; so some, again, by Fancy alone and a good conceit, are as easily recovered. . . . All the world knows there is no vertue in charms, etc, but a strong conceit and opinion alone,

. . . which forceth a motion of the humours, spirits, and blood; which takes away the cause of the malady from the parts affected. The like we may say of the magical effects, superstitious cures, and such as are done by mountebanks and wizards. As by wicked incredulity many men are hurt . . . we find, in our experience, by the same means, many are relieved."

So far as this quotation goes, at any rate, there is no room for me to criticise my famous predecessor of the seventeenth century; this old writer on worry saw the main facts clearly. It would not have been wise for me to leave the last chapter unbalanced by this, for we must clearly recognise that the influence of "worry in illness" is complemented by the influence of faith, sanguine imagination, or self-confidence, — "by the same means [*i. e.*, by the power of 'Phantasie'] many are relieved."

These, in brief, are the propositions which Dr. Tuke sets himself to consider, fortified in his appreciation of the worthiness of the task by this quotation from John Hunter, one of the acutest medical observers of any age: "There is not a natural action in the body, whether involuntary or voluntary, that may not be influenced by the peculiar state of the mind at the time." Plainly we must consider this subject, having elsewhere devoted much attention to the influence of the body upon the mind, and especially in the production of the mental state called worry.

Even to-day, the medical curriculum, though it becomes longer and more complicated every year,

and includes a whole host of specialisms, lacks not merely a formal course on Psychology, — an extraordinary omission to which I have frequently called attention, — but also any systematic study of the power of the mind as a therapeutic agent. Indeed, even after the lapse of a generation, these words of Dr. Tuke's are as applicable as ever: —

"The medical reader, I hope, may be induced to employ Psycho-therapeutics in a more methodical way than heretofore, and thus copy nature in those interesting instances, occasionally occurring, of sudden recovery, from the spontaneous action of some powerful moral cause, by employing the same force designedly, instead of leaving it to mere chance. The force is there, acting irregularly and capriciously. The question is whether it cannot be applied and guided with skill and wisdom by the physician. Again and again we exclaim, when some new nostrum, powerless in itself, effects a cure, "It 's only the Imagination!" We attribute to this remarkable mental influence a power which ordinary medicines have failed to exert, and yet are content, with a shrug of the shoulders, to dismiss the circumstance from our minds without further thought. I want medical men who are in active practice to utilise this force, to yoke it to the car of the Son of Apollo, and, rescuing it from the eccentric orbits of quackery, force it to tread, with measured step, the orderly paths of legitimate medicine."

So much, then, by way of reference to the book in which the influence of the mind upon the body was first adequately dealt with. We accept as an axiom the proposition that the mind can and commonly does influence or control bodily

processes of the most manifold and various kinds, both in health and disease. Elsewhere we consider the influence of the same or similar bodily processes upon the mind, both in health and disease — producing in health an *organic optimism,* and in disease, as a rule, an *organic pessimism,* depression or worry, though, in certain diseases, actually producing an abnormal optimism or exaltation.

Two distinct subjects remain, however, for brief reference in the present chapter: each of them must find a place somewhere in a book on worry. These are *hypnotism* and *hypochondria.*

Hypnotism, of course, could properly be dealt with only in an entire volume. Here I merely state established facts. Hypnotism has nothing to do with "animal magnetism" or any other physical entity; it is a purely psychical power. Hypnotism is a state of abnormal consciousness produced by what we know as *suggestion:* this may proceed from a hypnotist, from a sensation, or from an idea — "auto-suggestion," producing self-hypnotisation, is an established fact. There is no function of the nervous system that may not be modified during the hypnotic state, *and therefore no state of the body at large* that may not thereby be modified. Despite such objections as the opportunities it affords for quackery, hypnotism is unquestionably a state in which the mind may influence the body in such a way as to remove physical causes of worry (*e. g.,* nervous indigestion); it provides a condition in which, by sug-

gestion, worry-producing ideas may be caused to vanish, and it often enables the hypnotist to vanquish that potent predisposing cause of worry, insomnia.

Brief and passing references are made to *hypochondria* or *hypochondriasis* in other parts of this book; here I refer to it for the sake of formal completeness. Elsewhere we discuss worry in illness: hypochondria is simply *worry about illness.* The hypochondriac has a healthy body, but he suffers from a mental disease — a variety of morbid worry — which consists in a baseless apprehension of physical disease. Either he fears that some terrible malady is about to overtake him, or he magnifies into a mountain a mere molehill of discomfort; a distorted toenail, or a white tongue before breakfast (when nearly all tongues are white) may cause him more mental perturbation than grave disease will cause in another man. In its milder forms hypochondria is closely allied with valetudinarianism.

This baseless worry about disease may partly yield to change of air or occupation, to pleasant company and nourishing food; but it is a psychical disorder, and the true remedy for it is psychical. The "born physician," whom I discuss elsewhere, has only to bring his irresistible personality to bear upon it, and the cure is wrought.

I devote a special chapter to the vile manner in which sexual hypochondria is brought into being and fostered in young persons by the advertisers

whom an ignorant and careless standard of social ethics permits to do their dirty work with the aid of our public prints. I may add that much hypochondria is nowadays caused, also, by the advertisements of quack medicines, which teach, for instance, in utter defiance of the facts, that every trivial pain in the back is a symptom of grave kidney disease. The time will come when public opinion, educated at last, will make an end of these offensive nuisances.

VI

WORRY AND HEALTH OF MIND

In studying the influence of worry upon infectious diseases and upon the process of infection itself, we are concerned, after all, with that kind of disease which is becoming less and less important; whilst there remains another kind of disease, the importance of which is daily increasing. In the present chapter I wish to consider worry in its relation to the mind diseased, and we shall use this phrase to cover the whole realm of mental disorder, ranging from even the mere inability to work as hard as usual to insanity itself.

But first I purpose to throw in the very forefront of this article the question of what may be called the hygiene of the mind in so far as worry bears upon it. It would be useless merely to say that the mind must be protected from the influences of worry by a careful adherence to the injunction not to worry. This would be of no more practical value than would a mere unsupplemented demonstration of the potency of worry in this respect. But fortunately there is an extremely familiar practical question which recurs in regular fashion in the experience of each of us, and which has an immediate bearing on this question. Let us here

inquire, without further delay, into the philosophy of holidaying. Let us ask what a holiday really is worth, and what are the conditions in which its worth may be most fully realised. This is a subject true notions of which must necessarily be of value to every one who possesses them.

The first question to answer is as to what constitutes the *essential* of a holiday: What is a holiday? We must reject any definition which does not cover all the cases, and, if possible, must find one which gets to the heart of the matter. If we *do* get there we shall find, I wager, that our whole conception of all *real* and *necessary* holidaying must be framed in terms of worry.

For some men a holiday may consist in rest from any kind of set occupation. Their holidays are constituted by lying in a hammock with a handkerchief over the head, an unread book slipping from the fingers, and the senses occupied by nothing more than the sleepy hum of summer flies. If, in the course of such a holiday, one sleeps very nearly the round of the clock, it is none the worse for that. This may not constitute the reader's notion of a holiday, and it is very far from constituting mine; but for those whom it happens to suit, the *dolce far niente* is a holiday of the best.

On the other hand, another man's holiday — by which he may profit no less than his lazy neighbour by his — may consist in a cricket tour, including an enormous amount of physical work. Yet another will travel, covering almost impossible

distances and seeing an incredible number of things. Judged in physical terms, such holidays as these are the very antithesis of the first kind of holiday I have described. In the one case there is the minimum expenditure of physical energy; in the other cases, there is the expenditure of perhaps a dozen times the customary amount. Yet, as every one knows, these varying procedures all constitute true holidays for those whom they respectively suit. Plainly, then, any physical or merely *muscular* criterion of a holiday is a matter of accident and not of essence. In answering the question, What is a holiday? we must turn from the physical to the psychical — from matter to mind.

Is a holiday, then, constituted by freedom from mental work? Directly we think of it, we see that we have not yet reached an essential definition. One man's idea of a holiday is freedom for mathematical research; another longs for his holiday because he is to have the pleasure of writing a book therein; yet another will swear to read no printed word that he can avoid for six weeks, nor ever to take a pen in hand, and he also may obtain a genuine and effective holiday. Plainly, then, as the physical method of estimating a holiday failed us, so also does the method by estimation of mental work done or not done.

Yet certainly it is in the realm of mind that we must remain if we are to discover the one fact which is common to, and which is the only essential

of, all forms of holiday. It is some state of mind or other that really constitutes a holiday — and what is that? Well, it is certain that one may lock one's self up in one's room and have a superb holiday; one may go to bed with some not too unreasonable illness, such as a simple fracture, and may have a holiday of the best; or, on the other hand, one may travel abroad, meeting one's business letters at each Poste Restante, covering many miles, seeing many new things, and yet not holidaying at all. As I have repeatedly stated elsewhere, the business man on holiday, if he is wise, will not let any one know where he is. He is to be pursued neither by post nor telegraph nor telephone. "If his business worries are to follow him, he will do much better to stay at home and tackle them with the conveniences which that implies. The deadly thing in modern life is worry, and worry is more deadly on holiday than anywhere else, besides making the name a farce. Worry and responsibility are very nearly one; and thus the wise doctor on holiday will not be caught revealing his profession."

We have discovered, then, what really constitutes a holiday, and the discovery is a capital one, leading to many interesting conclusions. *To holiday is to be free from worry.* Every kind of holiday, wherever and however spent, possesses this character, and no proceedings which do not possess it can constitute a holiday. It follows that the unemployed rich, for instance, or such of them as

are free from any kind of responsibility or cause of worry, cannot holiday; it is not merely that they cannot enjoy a holiday, but that they cannot holiday at all. No matter what devices they employ or expenditure they undertake, they cannot obtain that sense of freedom from normal worry which is the essence of a holiday, and which is reserved for those who have work and duties and cares.

Again, it follows from our discovery that, even in the case of those who do a large amount of mental work, a holiday, as the term is commonly understood, may be totally unnecessary. Many men who lead the intellectual life work their brains as hard as ever during their holidays. There are countless instances on record of such men who never wanted or took what is commonly understood by a holiday, and who lived to an old age, physically and intellectually green. The happy few whose work so called involves no worry, no fear, no apprehension, make holiday every day, or are beyond the need of holidays — which you please.

For convenience we may express our conclusions in a very terse form, if we use the word "work" in its most common sense. *Work* is best defined as anything that one *has to do;* everything else, however much intellectual or physical activity it may entail, is occupation, employment, *divertissement,* or anything else you care to call it, but not work. The essence of a holiday, then, is the complete suppression of the normal struggle-for-

existence aspect of the mind's work. This once granted, it matters not at all how strenuously you employ yourself at anything whatever that you do for the love of it.

I fancy that some readers will expect me, in discussing worry, to insist that the modern civilised man is apt to overstrain his mind, never giving it a real rest. I may have been expected to declare that strenuous folk must learn how to do nothing, how to take a "real holiday." But I do not believe for a moment that the reality of a holiday depends upon mental rest. I believe that a man with a competent and active mind is in no more need of resting that mind than a batsman who has already made ninety-nine runs, and finds himself master of the bowling, is in need of resting his muscles. On the contrary, I incline to the view that it is good for the body and for the mind alike to exercise those functions of which they are capable. The batsman about to make his century will be in no wise benefited by being deprived of his opportunity to complete his tale of runs. The student who has written all but the crowning chapter of a book will be in no wise benefited by being deprived of his opportunity. The man with good muscles, the man with a good mind, the man with a good voice — in short, the man who is capable of exercising *without strain* any function whatever, does well in general to do so. In contravention of the common views on the subject may be noticed the very common cases of men, active,

vigorous, and eager in mind, who have done abundance of hard work for years and thrived on it, and who then, retiring from business, become a nuisance to themselves and their families, begin to overeat themselves, fret, fuss, and worry about trifles, and deteriorate in body and in mind — all in consequence of a holiday which was *premature,* and was therefore not wanted.

More persistently than ever, civilisation is tending to produce the type of man whose mind will not be content with doing nothing. My point is that there is no need for him to do nothing. If, like the vast majority of us, he has work to do — work in the sense of whatever has to be done willy-nilly — he must certainly have his annual holiday, his annual period of discharge from such worry as is normal and incidental to his work. But if this be granted it does not matter how hard he employs his brain *for fun.* He may play as much chess as he pleases, or may toy with algebraic formulæ, may write the most un-Miltonic of blank verse, or compose the most stale and effete and laboured of music; he may drive his brain as hard as he pleases in any direction whatever, provided that there be no *must* driving him, no worry, no fear of consequences, should his task not be done or not be done well. On the other hand, he may be one of those unfortunate people who will worry about their play, who thus transform into work, as we have defined work, everything that they do. Such a man on holiday joins in a local cricket

match; he is in a state of nervous perspiration before he goes in to bat, and he mopes all the afternoon because his partner ran him out. Precious little good the cricket has done *him!* I know a man, very dear to me, who rather fancies his batting, and who sometimes finds it difficult to get to sleep at night because he happened to come down a fraction of a second too late upon a fast "yorker" a few hours before. The more fool he! Plainly he is on the way to taking his cricket too seriously, converting it into work and a source of worry. Most people will rightly say that cricket is an ideal recreation for the brain-worker; but in the case I have instanced the brain-worker would be much better to work his brains harder than ever, as at chess, rather than worry when he fails to get runs. Furthermore, I believe that there is no evidence to support the doctrine which assures us that men kill themselves by overwork. Men kill themselves by worry every day, but not by overwork as such. For most brain-workers there is no better holiday than a novel intellectual occupation, provided that it be absolutely *careless.* I incline to believe that intellectual labour without worry never injured any one yet, and never will. I also believe that, just as the successful business man, when he retires, is apt to become a poor, querulous creature, worrying about the most ridiculous domestic trifles, so also the ordinary brain-worker who accepts the common doctrine that in order to holiday it is necessary to give the brain rest, may do himself

far more harm than good. If Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do, he certainly finds some worry still for the idle mind to endure — unless, of course, it be the mind of an idler, with which I have no interest or concern here. The true holiday of the brain-worker must not consist of replacing something by nothing, for Nature abhors a vacuum, and will fill it with worry. It must include the provision of a novel mental occupation in sufficient quantity, the essential character of that occupation being not its novelty, but the fact that there is no worry associated with it — it is done *for fun*.

This is not merely a question of the difference between working for money and not working for money. A man of an egoistic type, such as my friend, may do the greater part of his ordinary work for glory, and may play cricket with the same motive. When his cricket is not successful he worries just as he would worry if his work were not successful. There is all the difference in the world between this state of mind and that of the cricketer who plays the game for love of it alone, and who, if he fails to score, is merely disappointed. He will sleep none the worse for that.

Having defined the process of holiday-making, not in terms of matter and motion, as is commonly done, but in terms of mind, we shall find, I think, that the truer definition is not merely true, but useful. It will enable us to include under our idea of holiday-making certain occupations which would

never be associated with holidaying in the opinion of those who think that the essential of a holiday is the motion of a certain amount of matter — one's body — through a not too small amount of space. I wish the reader to include, as part of the hygienic or health-preserving process which we now understand holidaying to be, the habit of hobby-hunting. The importance of this habit daily increases, just as the importance of our whole subject daily increases. Natural selection acts nowadays not so much upon the plane of muscle as upon that of mind; not upon brawn, but upon brain. More and more, therefore, the normal or average mental type departs from what we may call the bucolic or rustic standard and approximates to the civic standard. The man who is happy doing nothing becomes scarcer, whilst the man of curious, busy, and active mind becomes more common. Now, such a man is more and not less prone to worry, and is more, not less, in need of freedom from worry; but that need is to be met by a positive rather than a merely negative process. The annual holiday is highly desirable, but it is very necessary for the modern man to remember that he must not count upon it too exclusively. Every day should include a period of holiday-making; and this is where the hobby comes in. I am only at one with practical psychologists and physicians in general when I insist upon the value of hobbies. We may distinguish hobbies from sports, perhaps, by describing the first as mental recreations and the

second as physical recreations. It is because of the needs of the modern mind that hobbies are so valuable. I have already spoken of the man of active mind who retires from business on some particular birthday — as if years, of all things in the world, constituted the criterion of age — and I have shown how such a man may suffer accordingly. But if he has a hobby, some form of mental occupation which he does for the love of it — anticipating the happy future state to which I look forward when all human occupations will be ends in themselves, and when no one will do uncongenial work because he must — the case is totally changed. Such a man is in no danger of suffering rapid psychical degeneration. Similar, also, is the case of the man who has to work for his daily bread at something from which worry cannot be always dissociated. Such a man very frequently will find that sports or physical recreations do not avail to banish from his mind the thought of business worries. It is, indeed, quite natural that as mind becomes more important and body less important in the constitution of man, amusements that are merely physical or bodily should cease to be as useful as they are in the case of the kitten or the child. In short, the average worried man needs something more than mere sport or play as such. His imperative demand is for a new mental interest. I have already said that Nature abhors a vacuum; and this aphorism may be especially applied to the modern mind. It must be filled with something,

and business cares will not be dispossessed from it merely because the body which it owns happens to be swinging dumb-bells. They must be pushed out by something else. Certainly the dumb-bells will suffice, or golf, or any form of sport, if they happen to arouse sufficient mental interest to banish any consciousness of the ordinary worries of life. The mere element of competition in sport is often quite sufficient for this end, since man is a competing animal if he is anything. The struggle-for-existence and sexual selection between them have seen to that. Hence, very often we find that the best relief from the serious competitions of life, entailing serious worries, is to be found in the mock-serious competition of games and sports with their mock worries. I have already adverted to the danger that in some people the mock worries may become real worries; but that must not be permitted. Nothing, I fancy, will dispossess a real worry better than a mock worry — of which one knows quite well, even whilst making the most of it, as every sportsman does when he tries to win a game for his side, that it is "only a game, after all," and does not matter. To lose gloriously in the field of sport is not the same as to lose, gloriously or ingloriously, in the field of real life.

But many men find, especially as they become older, that they cannot take sport even mock seriously enough for it to displace the ordinary cares of life from their minds. It is for such men that a hobby is a real salvation. As a man grows older

he begins to "funk fast bowling," or to find that his golf becomes worse, and so soon as he becomes less skilful he will derive less enjoyment and benefit. Fortunately, however, the mind takes much longer to grow old than the body, and when the sports of youth or even of middle age fail, a man may turn to one or other of a thousand hobbies, and find in them that mental interest which will give him every day a holiday or period of freedom from worry. Let the man beware, then, who too thoughtlessly permits all his intellectual interests to atrophy, save those which are concerned with his work. Do not let him be caught saying, "I have no time for music nowadays," or for any of a thousand other things. It is an imperative necessity for the average modern man, and is of the nature of an investment for coming years, that he shall persistently cultivate some other mental interest than that with which the worry of the struggle-for-existence is associated. Such a mental interest, though apparently not utilitarian, and though not cultivated for any utilitarian purpose, will yet prove to be a valuable weapon in the struggle-for-existence itself.

I have already said, what I here repeat as forcibly as possible, that an utterly false influence has been accredited to brain-work as such in the production of nervous breakdown and of insanity. I do not for a moment believe that any case of nervous breakdown or of actual mental disease was ever caused in a person of average nervous consti-

tution by mere intellectual labour as such. It is not work but care that kills; but it is highly desirable that we should examine somewhat more critically than is customary the proposition that men are driven mad by worry. If I were merely to emphasise this statement in this form I should be doing my readers a grave disservice in tending to perpetuate the utterly false notion of insanity which still prevails even amongst highly educated people. The public has yet to learn the paradox that mental disease is physical disease. The causes that produce physical disease in stomach, or lung, or heart, may produce physical disease in the brain, and the expression of that physical disease is mental disease or insanity. The overwhelming majority of cases of insanity depend absolutely upon material changes in the brain due to the circulation of some poison or other in the blood. Of these poisons the most important is alcohol — which, following an old teacher of mine, I have elsewhere called the toxin of the yeast plant. Scarcely less effective are the poisons or toxins produced by many other forms of lowly plant life which we know as bacteria. These poisons produce physical changes in the brain upon which the insanity depends. The doctrine that worry as such can produce mental disease is unintelligible to any one acquainted with these matters.

Nevertheless, we can state the facts in a more rational form. We begin by reiterating that, contrary to opinion, overwork as such cannot cause

insanity, but can do so only by first causing worry. We must then proceed to say that worry as such cannot be conceived to cause insanity, and, in point of fact, does not cause insanity. (I am now using the word in its common sense, to indicate the really grave forms of mental disease.) But worry has its ways and means by which it can and does cause insanity; they are only too easily enumerated, and only too abundantly illustrated in common experience. In the first place, worry is a potent cause of insanity because it leads to the use of drugs, and especially alcohol. Other aspects of this distressing subject are treated in another article. Here I need merely note that alcohol stands out far beyond any other one factor as a cause of insanity, and that worry is responsible for an enormous amount of drinking. Indirectly, then, worry is a terribly common cause of insanity, and any success that may conceivably attend our study of it will be, in its measure, success in attacking one of the most appalling problems of our civilisation.

Again, worry is a most potent foe of sleep, and lack of sleep is a most potent foe of sanity. I am sometimes inclined to think that the importance of sleep in preserving the mental health has been exaggerated by some writers. We know that before an attack of acute mania, only too often resulting in murder and suicide, a man commonly passes several sleepless nights. The sleeplessness is not a cause of his madness, however, but an early symptom of it. I am, indeed, inclined to think that

physical health suffers more than mental health from lack of sleep as such, but if the lack of sleep depends upon worry, and, still more, if drugs are resorted to in order that sleep may be obtained, the cause of the worry not being removed, then certainly we have a potent factor in the production of insanity. Though lack of sleep in itself is insufficient, I believe, to cause insanity — as is surely proved by the countless bad sleepers who do not lose their mental health — yet it is certainly a most important contributory factor in the production of insanity in that it makes the brain far more susceptible than it would otherwise be to the action of such poisons as may beset it. In a word, it lowers brain resistiveness. The use of alcohol and other drugs, then, and interference with sleep, constitute most frequent and effective means by which worry leads to mental disease of the graver kinds.

I have spoken at but short length of the actual relations between worry and grave mental disease. This has been possible since the intermediate links in the chain of causation are discussed elsewhere. On the other hand, I have spoken at very considerable length of the condition by which worry — such as most of us must daily encounter — may be prevented from causing the minor degrees of mental unhealth or mental lack of fitness. In a word, I have written less of the pathology than of the hygiene of the subject. This is right, I think, since my aim here is primarily to be useful, and

only secondarily to present a complete account of the subject. It is my honest belief that what has been said regarding the preservation of mental health by means of well-devised holidays — that is to say, periods of perfect freedom from worry — can scarcely fail to be of real utility, especially to many hard-working and conscientious readers, whose ideal of duty scarcely permits them any leisure for mental recreation; and I can certainly ask for no higher reward than to serve such readers as these.

VII

WORRY AND BOREDOM

WORRY in the widest sense may be defined as a "maladie des beaux esprits." The un-self-conscious animal does not worry, nor does the properly educated child nor does the savage. The case is the same with a psychical state closely allied to worry and known as boredom or *ennui.*

It is true that we commonly conceive of boredom as a neutral or negative state, whilst worry is certainly a positive and active state; but such an analysis is not adequate. The truly neutral state of the emotional nature is not boredom but apathy or un-self-conscious content. *Ennui,* on the other hand, *is* an active state of consciousness and may very soon pass into positive irritability. Like worry itself, it is peculiar to highly developed minds.

No one ever yet saw a bored dog, and no one can conceive of a bored cow. A very young baby is incapable of experiencing boredom, but a child belonging to any of the higher races will show signs of boredom as early as the second year of its life. Physicians who practise amongst children

are familiar with the phenomenon of the preternaturally "good" child. They are consulted about some mental defect observed or suspected and they are told that the child — aged say two years — never gives the slightest trouble; provided with the simplest toy or with none it will remain happy and contented for hours, never getting into mischief or needing the slightest attention. This is an extremely bad sign, and the physician discovers only too readily that the child *is an idiot* — either of the "cretin" or the "Mongolian" type. A child that will develop into a healthy adult member of one of the higher races should not be unnaturally "good." I have occasion to observe a baby, nearly two years old, that is very readily bored; no toy will keep it quiet for long; when it has been upstairs and awake for a short time it wants to come downstairs; and the expiry of half an hour downstairs finds it eager to go upstairs again. If it is not provided with plenty of change it soon becomes bored and irritable; and it is not safe to leave the child alone for a moment, for one never knows what it will be "up to" next. These characters, trying though they may sometimes be, augur extremely well for the future mental development of that child.

I have unique opportunities, also, for the study of the child's father, who is more easily bored than any one else I know. He was always addicted to reading at table, and no one has ever observed him taking a solitary meal without a book or a

newspaper. Rather than do so he would forgo the meal altogether. Until he learnt to drive himself, he would not ride in his own motor-car without a book. He dresses carelessly because he becomes bored and irritable after five minutes of the process. Even the pleasant organic sensations due to the easy digestion of a good dinner — sensations which suffice most people — do not avert boredom and irritability, with quite unnecessary worry about his work, unless he has active conversation or a book to amuse him. If he ever lay awake in bed he would probably explode. On the rare occasions when he finds himself in a public vehicle without something to read, every stoppage annoys him; and after such a journey he suffers from cramps in the thighs and calves, due to the continuous contraction of the muscles of the legs in the attempt to accelerate the movement of the vehicle. He has never taken a solitary, goal-less walk, and when he has to walk somewhere always takes a book with him. For some time he thought it inconsiderate to keep his chauffeur waiting for him at a concert with "nothing to do," until he discovered that this lack of occupation, so far from converting the man into an irritable source of profanity, caused him no distress whatever. *Dolce far niente* is for him a contradiction in terms. Nothing exhausts him but repose.

My friend is only an extreme case of a type which is highly characteristic of our time. We who more or less markedly belong to it know bet-

ter than to suppose that *ennui* is a merely neutral state of mind. We know, also, that, though it is not identical with worry, yet it cannot long be endured without leading to irritability and even actual worry.

I have described the type to the best of my ability, but I have no practical suggestions to make. The type should be definitely recognised, however, for its existence has an important bearing upon that exodus from the country into the cities which is so marked a social feature of the age. Keen observers are assured that civilisation is well named — it means city-fication — and the kind of mind that is produced by civilisation can only be contented in cities. An important factor in the depletion of our rural districts is the sameness, the tameness, the monotony of country life. City-dwellers acquire a factitious love of the country, *as a change,* but they would be very sorry to be condemned to permanent rustication. The modern mind is too active for country life to be tolerable. Before long it produces a boredom, with only temporarily pent-up irritation, which may actually cause more nervous wear and tear than the noise of " streaming London's central roar." And since confession is good for the soul, and especially since one concrete instance is worth reams of generalisation, I may freely admit that, after working in the quiet of St. John's Wood until, say, four o'clock in the afternoon, I often find myself becoming bored and, in order to avert the irritability which

would soon follow, hie me, on the smallest pretext, to such a neighbourhood as Oxford St., where the delightful crash of the motor-buses has lately made the Metropolis even dearer to at least one Londoner, and soon restores his mental satisfaction!

VIII

INSANE WORRY

HERE we must discuss the aggravated cases in which what we elsewhere call *morbid worry* actually reaches the pitch of *insane worry,* with its most terrible expression in all the various forms of *melancholia* itself. We may call morbid all worry except that which has a reasonable relation to some future evil that is feared. Now in certain cases — probably occurring only in consequence of actual instability of the brain, hereditary or acquired — some particular object of morbid worry may assume the character of what the French call a *fixed idea.* The possibility of bankruptcy, let us say, is so frequently presented to the mind that at last it becomes permanently fixed there — forming what, in other language, is called an *obsession.* Such cases, unfortunately, are far easier to describe than to cure; but at least it is possible to utter a grave warning to the reader that when he finds any sources of worry assuming this character of permanency, or all but permanency, and of an actual dominance over the whole sphere of consciousness — *something must be done, and that right early.* For instance, a mental specialist should be consulted. There is, of course, no sharp line

between sanity and insanity, except in the public mind; and it is thus impossible to assert the existence of any definite point, even in a particular case, where a merely unnecessary, futile, and injurious worry becomes a fixed idea bordering upon the insane. But it is quite certain that, in many amongst us, the mind is able so to prey upon itself that at last no close observer will question the case to be one of insane worry.

The actual category of insanity is indisputably entered when the fixed idea or obsession is found to bear no reasonable correspondence with its object. When this point is reached, the patient — as he must now certainly be called — is the victim of what is technically called a *delusion*.

Delusions may be of many kinds, including, for instance, delusions of grandeur, as when the patient fancies himself to be a king or millionaire; but here we are concerned with the much more frequently encountered delusions that have the stamp of worry upon them. Amongst these are, in the first place, delusions of fear of all kinds. In persons — especially young persons and women — who have heard much of religious beliefs, these may be of a religious character — delusions of having committed the unpardonable sin, of doom to eternal punishment, and so forth. Or they may be delusions as to imminent bankruptcy, to recur to our former illustration, in a man whose finances are, and are likely to continue, perfectly satisfactory.

Again, they may be bodily delusions. The pa-

tient may worry from morning till night — and from night till morning, poor fellow — because he believes that he has swallowed a cannon-ball, or the egg of some reptile that has reached maturity within him and is now gnawing at his vitals. Cases of this kind of insane worry have sometimes been relieved by the performance of a sham surgical operation, and the subsequent demonstration of the offending object to the patient; but, even so, the delusion, or another, is apt to recur. In cases of this kind it will commonly be found that the patient's *organic sense of well-being* is disordered.

There are also only too frequent cases of worry about some supposed disease, notably cancer, which have given rise to the term *cancer-phobia,* or fear of cancer.

Extremely common and familiar to the student of the mind diseased are *delusions of suspicion.* It is, of course, evident that suspicion is a form of worry, and baseless suspicion is one of the commonest forms of insane worry. Even in reasonably sane people of the artistic temperament, so called, there may occur times when they think that their friends are becoming cold, or repeating malicious gossip; and it is well for ordinary, sober, people who have such friends — often the most delightful and beautiful of souls — to remember this peculiarity of their character, and be ready to make allowances for it. In its definitely insane forms the suspicion is of a more serious kind. The husband doubts the fidelity of a " true and honour-

able wife"; there is a plot to destroy his reputation; attempts are being made to poison him; his children are being taught to despise him, and so on.

At the present time the general public is lamentably ignorant of the significance of such phenomena as these; with the consequence that they are not taken seriously. Well-nigh every day we read of terrible domestic tragedies, such as "Triple Murder and Suicide," and the like. These are certainly no less common than we think, and they are theoretically *preventable*. Not so long ago they were looked upon as crimes, pure and simple. The present writer possesses monographs written by his grandfather, for forty years visiting physician to the first humane asylum for the insane in Great Britain,[1] and accounts of criminal trials at which, in the witness-box, he endeavoured to avert the vengeance of the law from unfortunate wretches who had committed deeds of this kind but had failed to complete the act by suicide. The protests of humane science were commonly unavailing, however, even in those not distant days. Now, however, we recognise that, in such cases, the murder is the result of *madness;* and the fact — lamentable or fortunate according to the manner in which it is dealt with — is that the symptoms of this madness, when it is still merely incipient and not dangerous, are quite sufficiently striking and well-marked to be recognised by any one who has

[1] The Retreat, York.

heard of them, and who lives in daily contact with the patient. Therefore I say that these terrible tragedies are theoretically — and actually — preventable. No one suffering from grave physical disease, threatening death not only to himself but also to his nearest and dearest, would be permitted to go untended, whilst displaying symptoms no more definite and threatening than morbid fears and suspicions are in these cases. It is my hope that, if this book serves no other purpose, at least it will direct public attention to the need for recognising the significance of such suspicions and the possibility of averting the last consequences. Many a man, suffering from such suspicions, and aware, in his lucid intervals, that they were baseless, would spontaneously place the facts before a doctor, *if he had any realisation* of the appalling sequel that threatens.

In short, insane worry, showing itself in such ways as I have named, ought to be regarded as an invaluable danger-signal, to be immediately profited by, instead of being constantly treated with an apathy that will prove fatal.

As to how it could be that presumably humane and intelligent men, such as those who undertook the administration of the criminal law fifty years ago, could have such cases as these brought before them and could fail to recognise that such purposeless and unnatural deeds indicated insanity — as to how that could be I am not prepared to say. But it teaches a lesson of humility to us, who may

fancy that we, at least, are too enlightened to make such monstrous errors.

Lastly, there is insane worry as it is encountered in completely developed cases of melancholia in our asylums. Melancholia is a general name for a large and various group of diseases of the mind. Properly speaking, it is not a disease but a symptom, just as we now recognise that jaundice is not a disease but a symptom. Nevertheless it is so marked and frequent and dominant a symptom of mental disease that the name may still be conveniently employed in the old fashion. Worry, insane worry, is *the* characteristic of melancholia.

Now I must not be misunderstood. I do not assert that worry is apt to undergo aggravation in certain people, and so to *cause* melancholia. That is not at all what happens. Elsewhere we discuss the physical states that lead to worry, and the discussion is relevant here. We speak of mental disease, but in reality all mental disease is physical disease or bodily disease, the diseased organ being the brain. It is not the rule that worry causes melancholia, but that certain physical causes produce the brain disease or brain disorder of which melancholia or insane worry is the symptom.

The physical causes of melancholia are very numerous. In recent years influenza has been responsible for a very large number of cases. Then, again, it is apt to occur, in brains of unstable type, as a consequence of physical strain. Then there is the melancholia that follows on childbirth, and

that which is due to the strain of too prolonged nursing, and is known as lactational melancholia. These cases are very commonly curable. Insane worry is their cardinal symptom, and is frequently so intense as to drive the victim to suicide, unless this be prevented by timely precautions. When the physical health, including that of the brain, has been restored, — by recovery from the effects of the poison of influenza, or the effects of too frequent child-bearing, or many other causes — then the insane worries vanish. They never had any external warrant, and they cannot outlast their internal cause.

The forms which insane worry may assume in cases of melancholia are similar to those, some of which have already been detailed.

I would insist again on the all-important fact that insane worry is worry produced by insanity — not worry producing insanity. On the other hand, insanity so produced — and usually insanity of the melancholic type — must certainly be recognised, though its importance is subsidiary.

It follows that, in general, the cure of insane worry consists in the cure of the brain disease of which it is the expression. The amateur may be inclined to argue with the patient, expecting to convince his reason that his worry is unwarranted. But the expert knows this to be useless; he prefers milk, for instance, to argument in the case of insane worry. He feeds the patient liberally, and provides him with sleep, and when the brain is

thus restored to health and strength, the insane worry bred of its weakness vanishes like the baseless fabric of a vision.

Just as it is impossible to underestimate the importance of hard brain-work, in itself, as a cause of insanity, so it is easy to overestimate the importance even of worry as a cause of insanity. This point was discussed in the last chapter, but it is worth while to observe here that popular commentators — as, for instance, Lord Rosebery in a speech that excited much attention in October, 1906, — are not supported by facts when they arraign the pace and cares of city life as prime causes of the contemporary increase of insanity. The fact which has to be reckoned with is that the insanity rate is higher in rural than in urban districts. It is not my business to attempt an explanation of this fact here, but it shows, at any rate, that we may easily exaggerate the influence of worry as a cause of insanity. On the other hand, few who have not lived amongst the insane can adequately realise how terrible and abundant is the production of worry by insanity — *i.e.*, by disease or disorder of the brain.

IX

WORRY, DRUGS, AND DRINK

It is recorded of certain bees who had an opportunity of making acquaintance with alcohol in the form of fermented honey that they partook greedily thereof, and thereafter displayed the symptoms of excitement and loss of equilibrium, only too often exhibited by creatures whose nervous organisation is even higher than that of a bee. But it is further recorded that no amount of temptation, persuasion, nor yet starvation, would induce those bees again to make adventure with the honeyed poison.

Very different is the case with man. In all times and places he has been susceptible to the charm of drugs that markedly affect the nervous system — drugs of a very definite class. Beyond a doubt the fundamental fact of the human mind upon which the charm of these drugs depends is the fact of self-consciousness, the power of "looking before and after," which we have already seen to be the first condition of worry. All animals less than man live in and for the present. They may make apparent calculation for the future, but this is sub-conscious or instinctive — not rational. We may say that nervine drugs have no particular purpose or use except for the self-conscious being,

man, whose attitude towards them markedly contrasts with that of the bees whom I have cited.

It is certain that men have used alcohol whenever and wherever they have been able to make it, and that the alcoholic strength of the liquids they have consumed has been limited merely by their chemical knowledge. There is clear evidence that alcohol was extensively used in Egypt six or eight thousand years ago. In these days it has found certain rivals, some of them of very great importance for us. In addition to the drugs which properly belong to the same class as alcohol, there is at least one powerful drug, of unique properties, which is the active principle of tea and coffee, and is daily consumed in all but incredible quantities in every part of the world where it can be obtained. These various drugs must carefully be considered in the course of our study of Worry.

They must be considered because their charm, as we have seen, is for man — the worrying animal — alone, and because it is their influence upon the mind that constitutes their value and their charm. If to alcohol and to the caffeine of tea and coffee we add the nicotine of tobacco and the morphine of opium, we find ourselves faced with a series of substances which are daily employed by the overwhelming majority of human beings, and which, though they are not foods, nor in any way necessary to life, play a very large part indeed in modifying the state of men's minds and tempers and actions — which are, after all, the only interesting

things in the whole world. Now if man were no more mentally than even such a wonderful creature as the bee, these drugs, I think it is safe to say, would have no more charm for him than for the bee. But man is a reflecting mind; he can and does conjure up the past and anticipate the future; and in both cases there is the constant risk that his so doing will arouse unpleasant emotions — in a word, that he will worry about the past or the future or both. As long as man is man he will continue to live less in the present than out of the present. Now the drugs which man employs so largely have been welcomed by him not on any theoretical nor economic grounds, but simply and solely because he finds that they exercise an influence, which he rightly or wrongly welcomes, upon the emotional tone of his mind. Every one is familiar with the famous German students' drinking song for a bass voice, the substance of which is the statement that every kind of fear and care and worry vanishes whilst "drinking, drinking, drinking." There you have the facts in a nutshell. There are scores and scores of drugs which exercise marked properties upon the muscles, the nerve ends, the glands, the heart, the lungs, and all the other tissues and organs of the body. There are hosts of drugs which markedly affect, in various ways, the lower levels of the nervous system. But survey mankind from the dawn of civilisation till to-day and from China to Peru — you will not find that any of these drugs has taken a place in his

life. The drugs which he wants and has taken good care to obtain are those which affect consciousness — those which modify the emotional tone of his mind, those which banish care and drown sorrow, those which give him what he values more than any other thing that can be named, the *organic sense of well-being* with which life is worth living, and without which life is worthless.

After what has already been said the reader will not expect me to launch into a general denunciation of all these drugs. Some may say that it is not consonant with human dignity to drink alcohol, smoke tobacco and opium, or sip tea; man should be above the need of modifying his consciousness by these artificial means. This argument may be supported by the general conviction that the use of these drugs has always worked, and still works, a great deal of harm. But, on the other hand, many considerations may be urged and must here be detailed. In the first place, it is certain beyond certainty that neither denunciation, nor warning, nor legislation, nor any other measures whatever will wean mankind as a whole from its addiction to one or other of these drugs. Wherever and whenever they have been obtainable they have been used. They are more obtainable to-day than ever before, and are more widely used than ever before. The reasonable argument would seem to be that they must serve some human purpose. If their effects were noxious in all respects, they would scarcely have been heard of. The fact of their employment,

universal as it is, constitutes a proof of the fact that men find — or seem to find — them more or less useful. Perhaps, then, it will be better for us to recognise these facts, and to ask ourselves whether it is possible to distinguish between one of these drugs and another, to discover whether there is any which is wholly useful, or at any rate, to arrange them in some sort of scale which will indicate the proportions between the good and the evil that they accomplish.

And, first of all, let us ask ourselves exactly what it is that they do. The word commonly applied to these drugs is *stimulants,* and it is unquestionably true that, for many purposes and on many occasions, men welcome substances which increase the rapidity of their vital processes. Such substances are conspicuously contained in many articles of diet; but when we come to consider the leading case of alcohol, we shall find that the common belief requires criticism. Alcohol is commonly spoken and thought of as a stimulant, and we know, of course, that the first result of its action is to cause an increased rapidity of the pulse, an increased activity of many glands, and a very definite degree of mental excitement. In these respects alcohol is strictly comparable with opium, which plays a corresponding part in the life of an enormous section of mankind. It may be said, in general, that a race employs either alcohol or opium, but not both, for both are not needed. Whether the one or the other be used, however,

it is not long before the stage of stimulation or excitement gives place to one which is distinguished by precisely opposite characters. The tide of life now flows more slowly, the various physical functions are depressed, the mind becomes less active, and if a sufficiency of either drug has been taken, sleep or unconsciousness ensues. If the dose be well calculated, this last stage may not be quickly reached, but the subject will remain for a long period in a state which indicates that he has taken a *sedative,* and not a *stimulant.*

Now no man takes a sedative in order that his pulse may beat more slowly, or in order that the number of his respirations per minute may be reduced. He takes a sedative in order that he may attain that particular state of mind which it is the characteristic of a sedative to produce. Undoubtedly alcohol may be taken at times for its supposed stimulant effect upon the powers of work, but it is indisputable that the action of alcohol and of opium, which has led these drugs to play their part in human life, is their power of producing *peace of mind.* That is why I must consider them here. What men want in all times and places is happiness — conscious and self-conscious happiness. Yet, because they are men, able to look before and after, this state which they desire is constantly threatened by the presence of regrets, fears, and cares, depression and apprehension — in a word, by worry. It has long since been discovered that alcohol and opium are antagonistic to worry.

Never yet was the unhappy state of mind that would not yield to an adequate dose of one or other of them. I submit, then, that there is a very grave and very stupid fallacy in the common conception of alcohol in the West or opium in the East as stimulants. *They are taken and used not as stimulants, but as sedatives.*

In order to clear up our views on this subject it is necessary to see whether they are in accord with what is actually known concerning the actions of these drugs on the body. Now, it has been demonstrated in the case of both of them that their stimulation of the body is, so to speak, preliminary and accidental, and that a depression or soothing or sedation of the bodily functions, and with them the mental functions, is their essential character. As every one knows, opium is very largely used in medicine; more especially nowadays in the form of its chief active principle morphia. But no doctor thinks of morphia as a stimulant, or uses it as a stimulant. The doctor is aware of its preliminary stimulant action, and takes measures to alleviate or obliterate that action in order that he may obtain the sedative action which is the true character of the drug and which he desires.

Extremely significant, but yet unknown to the public in general, are the similar facts in regard to alcohol. This is a substance of paradoxes; in general, what it does is just the reverse of what it seems to do. It is still called a stimulant, as it was half a century ago. At that time not only was

it called a stimulant, but it was widely used as a stimulant by doctors. It was supposed to increase vital activity in all directions, and was used as an aid to the body in its fight against disease of all kinds. But in these days of scientific medicine our whole conception of alcohol has changed. As we have already seen, the public speaks of it as a stimulant, but, in point of fact, uses it as a sedative — uses it because it is able to calm the worrying mind, to banish care, and to bring peace. Similarly, nowadays, the most scientific physicians both speak of alcohol and use it as a sedative. Some think, for instance, that when the body temperature tends to become too high in consequence of the excessive activity of the vital processes, alcohol may be of use, for it lowers the temperature. Similarly, it may produce sleep, both in fever and at other times. True, like many other sedatives, it causes a period of preliminary excitement, but that must be shortened or neutralised as far as possible.

If now we turn to the fundamental chemistry of alcohol and opium, we find that it confirms my doctrines as to the true character of these drugs and as to the true explanation of their universal employment. The fundamental fact of the chemistry of the body is the fact of burning, combustion, or oxidation. The more rapidly we burn, the more rapidly we live. Both alcohol and opium have been proved to interfere with oxidation or combustion in the body. They markedly retard the

rate at which the oxygen we take in from the air is combined with the tissues. In the midst of the confusion which reigns as to the classification of drugs, it seems to me that we have here a fundamental, chemical distinction. The drug the net result of which is to increase the rate at which we burn away is essentially a stimulant; the drug the net result of whose action is to diminish the rate at which we burn away is essentially a sedative. For convenience we may apply the term *pseudo-stimulant* to those sedatives, such as alcohol, opium, or morphia, which display a preliminary transient stage of stimulation.

Ere we conclude it will be necessary to pronounce judgment upon these substances, and the recent additions to the same group. But before doing so, we must consider the case of *caffeine* (or theine), which is the active principle of tea and coffee, as also of the kola nut and Paraguay tea or Maté, and of some other substances which are similarly employed in various parts of the world. The importance of the subject may be suggested by the fact that of tea alone there is consumed in Great Britain about four million gallons every day. Consider that an ordinary cup of tea contains about a grain of caffeine, and then calculate how many millions of grains of this potent alkaloid daily enter into the blood of the British people. To this add all the caffeine contained in coffee, and it will be evident that the subject is of some practical interest. Now the

contrast between alcohol and caffeine very soon suffices to show how foolishly the word stimulant is commonly employed. Caffeine is a true stimulant and has no other action. It has been proved to increase the amount of combustion in the body in whatever dose it be taken; it tends to raise the temperature. Its truly stimulant action is still more conspicuous if we consider the mind, and mind is the only important matter. The larger the dose of opium or alcohol that be taken, the more certainly and rapidly will you sleep; the larger the dose of this true stimulant that be taken, the more certainly and persistently will you keep awake. About fifteen grains of caffeine will entirely abolish both the desire for and the possibility of sleep, for a whole night and longer, and will make it possible to do hard intellectual work at high speed, and of the best quality possible for the brain in question, during the hours which sleep would otherwise have certainly claimed. These facts will abundantly suffice to show how superficial and stupid is the common application of the same term "stimulant" to drugs so profoundly contrasted as alcohol and opium on the one hand, and caffeine on the other. I am tempted to go much further into this question because the distinction which I have demonstrated is not recognised even in text-books that deal with these subjects. And yet it is a fundamental one. What could well be more absurd than to apply one and the same name on the one hand to drugs which

in sufficient doses will infallibly arrest consciousness, even in cases of great bodily pain or of violent mental excitement or both; and, on the other hand, to a drug which in adequate doses will infallibly prevent that normal recurrence of unconsciousness which we call sleep? Obviously there is no word that can possibly include both sets of drugs, unless it be the word antagonists.

Of nicotine, the active principle of tobacco, it is unfortunately impossible to speak in any such dogmatic fashion. The statements I have made regarding opium, alcohol, and caffeine are scientific facts, admitted and recognised by all competent students. There is no dispute about them — a circumstance which makes it the more remarkable, perhaps, that the radical opposition between the sets of facts in the two cases is so commonly ignored. But nicotine appears to act in various fashions upon various persons. For some it appears to be a stimulant, for others a sedative, and the individual differences have not yet been explained. In passing, then, to consider those questions for which all that has been said hitherto is merely preparation, we shall find that it is impossible to lay down the law regarding nicotine as might be desired.

These questions, of course, are concerned with the actual as distinguished from the apparent value of the representative drugs which have been considered. Here is this great fact of worry, fear, regret, apprehension, and grief, which constantly

attends upon or threatens the mind of man and against which these and many other drugs are known to operate. Is their use worth while?

Now if the reader remembers or believes nothing else whatever that I say here on this subject, or that I have said or may say on any other subject anywhere else, I beseech him at least to believe this: *the habitual use of sedatives* — such as alcohol, opium, morphia, sulphonal, trional, veronal, paraldehyde, chloral, cocaine, and their allies, — *is to be condemned without qualification as false in principle and fatal in result.* It is true that these drugs will one and all relieve worry, banish care, and procure peace of mind, but it is as true that the worry, the care, and the dispeace will return, bringing seven devils with them, and that the latter end of the man who uses them for this purpose *is not peace.* They are false friends. For every unit of mental unrest that they remove they will inevitably create many such units. They are false in principle because they make no attack whatever upon the cause of the worry. That cause may be ill-health; these drugs will most assuredly aggravate it. That cause may be overwork; these drugs will most assuredly lessen the power of work. That cause may be the loss of the organic sense of well-being, which is the first and only condition of bodily and mental happiness; these drugs will, for the time, by their sedative action arrest those internal sensations which are found displeasing, and which make men

into pessimists, *but* the after result of their action is invariably to cause these sensations to return more abundantly than ever, demanding a larger and an accelerated second dose of the drug. Worry is curable because it has causes which are removable. In all ages and places, the chief cure adopted by men has been the use of these sedatives, *which are no cure,* because they do not begin to remove the causes of worry. They merely drown or submerge the worry for a time, as ill weeds may be submerged with water. But when the drug or the water has passed away the ill weeds are found to have grown apace.

In western countries generally, alcohol is at once the commonest cure for worry, and amongst the most potent of the causes of worry. It is not my concern here to speak in detail of the effect of this and similar drugs upon character, upon the ability to work, or even upon physical health, except in so far as these influence the state of the mind. The great fact is that, ignoring all external considerations, and directing our attention solely to the actions of these drugs upon the body and the mind, we find that their sedative action upon worry is such as to be invariably and necessarily followed by bodily and mental changes of which the product is worry multiplied manifold. If my condemnation of the use of these drugs, in ministering to the mind diseased or distressed, be less unqualified or less vigorous than it might be, the cause is to be found not in my estimate of the facts, but in

my defective power of expressing that estimate. I accuse these drugs as irreconcilable foes of human happiness; so essentially detestable that their masquerade as friends of man can scarcely make one detest them more.

Let us turn now from the sedatives to the stimulants, the terms being used not in the common unscientific, but in the uncommon scientific sense. Must caffeine, as represented by tea and coffee, fall under a like condemnation? This would be somewhat paradoxical if it were so, because we have already seen that these two groups of drugs are essentially opposed in their physiological properties. The sedatives we have condemned because they do nothing for the life of the body but are opposed to it. The stimulant, caffeine, on the other hand, as we have seen, favours the life of the body, promotes the processes of combustion on which life depends, increases vitality, and that power to work which is the expression of vitality. Everywhere men find that a cup of tea or coffee is refreshing; it produces renewed vigour; it heightens the sense of organic well-being, the consciousness of fitness and capacity. This is utterly distinct from the action of alcohol or opium in deadening the sense of ill-being. Tea antagonises the sense of ill-being not by deadening one's consciousness of it, but by stirring the sources of vitality and by the positive substitution for it of that sense of well-being which is the index of vitality. Here is a

true stimulant — something that favours life. How, then, will its use affect worry and the causes of worry? Is the plan of employing it superior to the plan of employing sedatives or is it even worse?

The answer is, of course, that the plan is immeasurably superior. But before I insist upon this assertion, let me make certain qualifications. In the first place, I recognise that the ideal would be neither to need nor to employ any drugs whatsoever; but here our concern is not with the ideal, but the real. Again, I will admit, of course, that every good thing — except, perhaps, the spiritual goods, like love — depends for its goodness upon a fitness of proportion. The sun is the source and condition of all earthly life, yet men have died of sunstroke. Caffeine is a good thing in its essence because, like sunlight itself, it is a true stimulant in that it favours the essential processes of life; but, like sunlight itself, it is capable of abuse, though the remarkable fact is that it is very difficult to obtain symptoms of abuse even when this drug is employed in large quantities. Tea and coffee have had many hard words said of them. The trouble is that people will not distinguish. Tea, for instance, as commonly understood in this country, is more nearly a decoction than an infusion of the tea leaf, and contains besides the theine or caffeine a very large proportion of tannin or tannic acid. Now the action of this substance upon the body is wholly deleterious; it interferes

with the activity of every tissue with which it comes in contact; it markedly interferes with the digestion in at least two ways — first, by tanning many of the proteids of the food, so that, like other forms of leather, they can scarcely be digested at all; and secondly, by interfering with the production of the digestive juices by the walls of the stomach. As long as the present vitiated taste for tea persists, large numbers of people will continue to do themselves great injury by drinking it; but it is ludicrously unscientific to assume that the evil consequences of drinking improperly made tea are necessarily to be attributed to the valuable caffeine which it contains. If we consider the gigantic amount of tea and coffee that we daily drink and allow for the injurious effects of the tannin which abounds in improperly made tea — that is to say, in nine-tenths of all tea — we must acquit caffeine of any very deadly properties. There will remain to its credit the many desirable consequences with which every one is familiar.

I assert, then, that whereas all sedatives are to be condemned in the relief of worry on the ground that they do not attack the causes of worry, on the ground that, in proportion to their immediate potency, they establish a craving for themselves, and on the further ground that their after effects invariably include the production of more worry than was relieved in the first place, the stimulant caffeine, on account of which we consume so much tea and coffee, may be excused, if not justified and

applauded. Taken in reasonable quantities, such as very few people desire to exceed, it differs fundamentally from all the sedatives in that it does not produce a need for a continuous increase of the dose. It relieves worry not by a temporary and actually nutritive and fostering submergence of it, but by attacking its causes. The man who is worried because his work is too much for him finds his work facilitated and its accomplishment accelerated under the influence of caffeine. Assuming that his work ought to be done, what better way of dealing with his worry could be conceived? Again, a great deal of worry is caused by defective vitality. The man of radiant health and almost offensive energy, who is "always at it," has no time to worry. He has too many other things to do. Mental unrest afflicts rather those whose vital processes are slower, and especially those whose vital processes are too slow. Under the influence of a true stimulant, such persons may often be tided over a period of threatening depression simply in virtue of the fact that their vital processes — which have become too tardy — are accelerated, with a consequent access of energy and a more due prominence of the organic sense of well-being.

In so far, then, as the subject of these articles is concerned with the use of drugs, we may say that it is necessary first to search below appearances, and to distinguish between drugs that are really sedatives and those that are really stimulants.

The sedatives are to be condemned without reserve. This condemnation applies to tobacco in the case of those persons, relatively few, I think, on whom it acts as a true sedative, retarding vital processes; but it is so difficult to find the truth about tobacco that I regret having to mention it at all. On the other hand, the true nerve stimulant, caffeine — which is in a class by itself — cannot be similarly condemned, but its judicious use may be regarded as justifiable and profitable.

In surveying this chapter my fear is that any portions of it may have prevented me from throwing into the boldest relief what is by far the most important fact that it contains — the fact that alcohol has no place, use, or purpose, in the relief of worry, and that its so-called use — in this connection, at any rate — is never anything but abuse or misuse, always dangerous, always productive of more evil than it relieves, and only too frequently suicidal.

X

WORRY, WILL, AND ACTION

It is very commonly, yet curiously, supposed that the actions of men and women are determined by their beliefs — that the will, with all its results, is the servant of the intellect. Students of the mind, however, know that this is not so; the relation of the intellect to the will is merely that of an adviser or guide which investigates and suggests the means by which the will may accomplish *its* will. Creeds, beliefs, opinions, and what is commonly understood by education — these are not the mainsprings of human action. Any belief or opinion may act as a *pilot,* but something else is the gale.

Plainly, it is a matter of the utmost moment to discover this something else which determines the acts of men and so gives human life its characters and decides its consequences. The man in the street may know that psychology is the study of the mind, and by the mind he understands the reason or the intellect; but psychologists of to-day are far more concerned with other aspects and attitudes of the human spirit, since they realise that elsewhere than in merely intellectual processes are to be found the causes of human action. The

extraordinary idea that the mind consists of the intellect alone still pervades the legal and popular notion of insanity, which considers that the holding of erroneous opinions is the sole test of insanity, and is unaware that a man may have a keen and balanced intellect, and yet be utterly and dangerously mad.

In all that has been said I am trying to show the importance of my present subject, as we shall immediately see. The real causes of human action are not rational convictions, such as the conviction that two and two make four, which in themselves are powerless to affect the will, and have never yet *caused* (though they continually *direct*) any human action whatever; but are states of feeling or *emotion.* Emotion, as the word suggests, is the cause of human motion: the emotion of love causes motion towards the beloved object; the emotion of fear causes motion from the feared object; the emotional state known as courage will cause one act, the emotional state known as hate will cause another. The mainspring of will is emotion. Students of the mind diseased are acquainted with cases of what they call *apathy,* which literally means *no feeling.* These result in what is called *aboulia,* which means *no will.* The utterly apathetic person *does nothing.* Feeling neither the emotion of hate, nor that of love, or ambition, or fear, or apprehension, or jealousy, or even a desire to live — such a person becomes like a vegetable. Danger does not affect him. The cry of

fire will not cause him to stir a finger. He will remain motionless whilst his child is drowning before his eyes, and even ambition, the last infirmity of noble minds, stirs him not at all. He is in the state aimed at by the ascetic, Buddhist, or Christian, who has conquered all desire, and who has therefore conquered his own will. He has no emotions, no motives, and therefore no motions, which are the outward manifestations of will.

Plainly, therefore, any one who desires to understand or explain human life, to read the hearts of men, like Cassius, to know *why* men and women do wise or foolish things, must make himself a student not of the part of the mind which we call the intellect, but of the part which we call the emotional nature. This alone will give him the key to human action, since this alone is the cause of human action.

Books have been written on the manner in which the acts of men and women are determined by love, by fear, by ambition, by the desire to assert self, and by the desire to renounce self. But no one has yet written a book on the way in which the acts of men are determined by one of the most potent and frequent and malign of all emotional states — that state which we call *worry*. If it were possible, I should devote a whole book to this new, and yet old subject; but, as things are, I must content myself with a brief chapter, hoping to be suggestive rather than final in my treatment of this vast subject.

Sometimes the influence of worry upon the conduct of its victim may be negative rather than positive; its action is paralytic. This consequence of worry is most commonly manifested in those who lead the intellectual life. The man who has a book to write, or plans to make, or a practical problem to solve by his wits, may find that worry paralyses thought. He "cannot give his mind to his work." The power of sustained attention to his business is utterly destroyed by his emotional state of mind.

There can be no question that the world has suffered incalculable loss by the influence of worry upon men of genius. The typical genius — such as Schubert, let us say — is a man little appreciated by his own age, and little fit for the practical tide of life. He is constantly the prey of worry — temporarily eased, perhaps, as in Schubert's case, by the benefactions of a publisher who gave him ten pence apiece for songs to which men will listen as long as ears can hear. The idea of a home for geniuses has often been ridiculed, and people have declared that no works of art would be produced save under the influence of the need of money, forgetting that the true genius must do his work or die. One of our indictments against worry, then, is certainly its paralytic effect upon the most valuable functions of the human mind, and especially upon the creation of works of genius — the worth of which in human life is daily increasing.

We are all familiar with the paralytic effect of worry in other conditions. Excess of self-con-

sciousness tends to produce what we call "nervousness," and every one who has played games or spoken or sung or acted in public knows what are the effects of this minor species of worry. In games we know that confidence is half the battle; that "nervousness," lack of confidence, worry about one's capacity, and apprehension of failure are all but certain to produce that which they fear. If the relative importance of the subject merited further consideration it would be of interest to consider how it is that worry is enabled to interfere in those delicate muscular co-ordinations upon which success in most games of skill depends, and how it is that lack of worry, and, better still, the presence of its opposite — a judicious self-confidence — provides the best condition for success, whether in singing or playing billiards or public speaking. But it is not with these negative influences of worry upon human actions that I am here mainly concerned, interesting though they are, and serious though they may often be in many a case.

Having shown that the positive acts of men are determined by their emotions, I wish to classify and describe the kinds of acts that men perform under the influence of the emotion we are studying. In general, it may be safely said of any emotion, such as love or even its opposite, hate, that it may lead to desirable acts or to undesirable acts. This is obviously true of the case of love, and is no less true of its opposite, for hatred of

evil may lead to desirable action, just as other kinds of hate may lead to evil action. But I summarily assert that the influence of worry upon the will of man is wholly and invariably bad. No qualification is needed for the assertion that this potent motor force invariably tends to drive us to wrong action.

The very smallest indictment to be laid against the door of worry in this respect is that it leads to too hasty action. In general, we know that we want *happiness* of one kind or another. It is the business of the reason to decide, in any given case, how that end may best be attained. Under the pressure of worry we only too often act hastily and without adequate use of the reason, and so we do the wrong thing. We feel that it is far better to make some decision — any decision — than to continue in a state of suspense, doubt, anxiety, worry; and so we make our decision before we are able to ensure that it is the wisest decision. Here the real motor, precipitating our action, is worry, and the consequence, as like as not, will be yet more worry.

But the graver aspects of the influence of worry upon human conduct will be realised if we consider the fashion in which worry causes us to meet every-day difficulties of life. When the mind is at peace with itself and circumstances, the ordinary calls of life upon our patience, our forbearance, our perseverance, and our power of overcoming difficulties, are adequately met. We do not lose our sleep,

or fly to alcohol or other drugs; and a difficulty may even act as a not unwelcome stimulus, fit to make us realise the best of which we are capable. But contrast the fashion in which the victim of worry meets life's demands. Even the slightest of them suffice to make him irritable. Now, irritability is a terribly powerful influence for evil in too many lives, and its chief cause is worry. I will not forget that many a man and many a woman becomes irritable in consequence of various kinds of physical disease, or in consequence of insomnia. But it is pre-eminently the worried man that is the irritable man. Let us, then, consider a typical instance of the practical influence of worry upon conduct.

The worried business man returns home in the evening, but brings his business worries with him. When he is not worried he is a considerate and affectionate husband and father; his wife's little requests, the noise of his children's play, do not disturb his equanimity. On the contrary, it is a pleasure to be able to serve his wife, and an enjoyment to hear his children enjoying themselves. But how different is the effect of precisely the same influences upon the worried man! This noise in which he would otherwise find the sweetest music falls upon other ears — ears made hypersensitive, no doubt, by the strain to which his nervous system has been subjected; and he displays what physiologists call the "irritability of weakness." The noise is actually louder than it would

otherwise appear, and he cannot tolerate it. The wise wife may soon see that "something has worried Jack to-day," and she will prevent her children from exposing themselves to the consequences, whilst she will defer her request for a new hat until a more auspicious occasion. But this is not always possible, nor is it always done when it is possible; and the result will be disaster. The noisy little boy may receive a blow when he expected a smile, and his drum may come to an untimely end. Doubtless the father's worries depend upon the fact that he has to support a wife and children whom he loves; but the influence of worry is invariably malign, and will show its malignancy even in the case of those whose interests have caused it. If the worry is a daily and persistent force, the children may become intolerable; their father seems to love them less, and therefore they love him less. They suffer, and so does he.

But the burden is far worse for the wife and mother, even though she is better able to understand its cause. The very sight of her may suffice, or almost suffice, to rouse the latent irritation of which worry is the cause, and happiness leaves the home.

To these considerations we must add the consequences of that very constant foe to womankind — *domestic worry*. The burden of life by no means falls entirely upon the sex which groans most loudly under it. It is the peculiar character of a woman's work, of course, that it is never done.

The man has at least the change, as a rule, from the environment of business to the environment of home, and this may suffice — in accordance with what was said when we were discussing holidays — to change the mental currents, so that business worries disappear. The woman has not this advantage; the environment of home and of business are one and the same for her. The escape from domestic worry is thus specially difficult. The conscientious, diligent, and hard-pressed housekeeper of all ages and places is apt, like Martha, to be troubled about many things; and small blame to her. That she should become irritable in consequence of domestic worry is quite inevitable at times, and then everybody suffers — husband, children, servants, and herself. These are all commonplaces, I admit, but a necessary condition for the cure of domestic worry and its consequence is an impartial, detached recognition of the facts and their origin. It may fairly be said, I think, that women have only themselves to blame for a very considerable proportion of domestic worry, with its consequences of irritability and bad temper, leading to worse things. Even after fully recognising that the ordinary housewife is specially subject, at any rate at times, to unavoidable worry, we must surely grant that the common practice of living up to the very limit of one's means, if not beyond it, is responsible for a great deal of woman's worry that might be avoided. One says especially woman's worry, because it

would appear that the wife, rather than the husband, is more often responsible for the neglect of that margin of income which, as Mr. Micawber knew, spells happiness. Hence it is worth while yet again to point out the commonplace facts — that the happiness attained by keeping three servants when one can only afford two is most lamentably outweighed, not merely by the worry involved in the incessant effort to make both ends meet, but also by the consequences of that worry upon sleep, health, digestion, and temper — these, again, injuring every member of the family, and possibly leading to its utter destruction.

For it cannot be doubted that mere petty worry, acting like the "cumulative poisons" with which doctors are familiar, only too often forms a necessary link in the chain of causation which leads to estrangement between parents and children, or estrangement between themselves, leading to separation or even divorce. This is a terrible indictment against worry that it not infrequently destroys the family, which is the necessary unit of society, and the stability and security of which constitutes the first condition of any stable and secure society.

We have already spoken of worry as the state of emotion which often produces in men the will to end their own lives.

Having considered the fashion in which worry affects the actions of the individual as an individual, and his or her actions as a member and

constituent of the family, let us observe how society as a whole is affected by the action of worry upon its individual units.

What has already been said will suffice to enable us to realise that part of the cost of worry is a great loss of individual and therefore of social *efficiency*. It is commonly supposed that the welfare and success of an individual is his affair alone, just as it is commonly supposed that a nation can thrive only by injuring other nations. But it is not so. On the contrary, it is certain that the failure, the premature death, the diminished efficiency of any individual, act in general as an injury to every member of the society of which he forms part. A force, then, which makes for inefficiency, often paralysing and arresting or destroying desirable acts and accomplishments on the part of individuals, has a personal interest even for the fortunate few whom it does not directly affect. The malign action of worry upon the deeds of individuals must be reckoned, then, as an injury to the body politic. Worry raises the death rate, very notably the disease rates, for each of which, and especially the latter, society has to pay. It raises the accident rates: we have seen how it interferes with the nervous balance and co-ordination, and with the self-confidence which are necessary in all games, arts, and duties involving muscular skill. Society, also, has to pay for the hospitals and the asylums and many other charities, the need for which is largely increased by worry. The individual, the family,

and society at large, then, are injured by the effects of worry upon human actions.

There remains one other notable fashion in which worry affects human action, and, as in every other case, affects it for the worse. Our final subject here, then, is worry in its relation to the great goddess of getting on. Worry as the servant of this goddess seems to be more potent nowadays than ever heretofore, and it is important for us to consider how far this kind of worry — worry about getting on, or *ambitious worry* — depends upon a false conception of the true means to our common end — life and happiness.

I decline to say that this kind of worry depends upon a false philosophy. In all likelihood the reader is familiar with the most popular books of Dr. Samuel Smiles, such as "Self Help." Since his death we have read many jibes at the lowness of his ideals and the contemptible character of his teaching. But, after all, those who penned these jibes would doubtless have jumped at the chance of bettering themselves as readily as their fellows. I venture to say that every normal person, in virtue of the common human inheritance, has a greater or less desire to get on; ambition is the last infirmity of noble minds. We desire to get on simply because we suppose that in doing so we shall get happiness, and it is quite idle to pretend that, up to a point, our argument is not well-founded. We are familiar with the millionaire who assures us that he was happier as a ragged boy, and we do

not doubt his word. He speaks of the burden of wealth, but we do not observe that he seeks to relieve himself of the burden. We say that there is a compensating balance in life, and we quite properly recognise that the poor man does not suffer from his poverty as the rich man would do if his riches left him. We recognise that there is a principle of adaptation to the environment, and that one does not miss what one has never known. But this very principle — that happiness as conditioned by material circumstances depends very largely upon what one is accustomed to — is in itself the very best argument for the desire to get on, since he who succeeds in getting on is constantly enjoying new advantages which, just because they are new, mean much more to him than they do to others born with a silver spoon in their mouths. As far as I can learn from biology, Nature not only sanctions, but also aids and abets in every possible way the desire for happiness, and if getting on is going to serve happiness, I am not prepared outright to condemn it.

But that is the whole question. It is an almost universal human character to glorify the means at the ultimate expense of the end. We see it in its most piquant form in the miser, starving, shivering, dirty, unattended, clutching his useless gold. We see it in the bibliomaniac who purchases first editions, and covers his shelves with wisdom, into which he never dips. It is enough for him to own the book. He does not care to read it, much less

would he disfigure its immaculate pages with marginal notes. And the case is the same with "getting on." It is not an end in itself, but a means — and certainly not an entirely contemptible and negligible means — to the true end of happiness; but our general tendency betrays us here, and we make of the means an end. Happiness or no happiness, we will "get on," and it is at this point that worry takes its place.

To worry about getting on is plainly to forfeit happiness on account of that which is to bring happiness. This is no bargain for a rational man. Observe that I am not speaking here of the attempt to earn a competence or such an income as may make marriage possible. Worry on these scores may be recognised as futile, but it can scarcely be called irrational. The irrational worry about getting on is that which implies the inability to be content or to enjoy the present. Directly it is so defined, every one must admit the justice of the adjective "irrational"; besides, it is of its very nature to be deprived of satisfaction, for it has no definite goal. I think there is little doubt that this kind of worry is a very insidious trap for many young men whose incomes are not fixed, but vary in proportion to the amount of labour which they are prepared to expend. The fact that money is only a means to an end tends to be forgotten. The symbol, as ever with symbols, is exalted at the expense of the thing symbolised. Men who have no occasion to overwork, find themselves prematurely

senile, or temporarily incapacitated, in consequence of the extraordinary delusion that it is a man's duty to make as big an income as he can. I do not say that this doctrine is definitely formulated by all of us, but in point of fact we nearly all subscribe to it. We know perfectly well that the income is not an end in itself, but we know that it is a very effective means to the only end we care about, and before we know where we are we have been trapped into the practical, if not the theoretical, acceptance of the doctrine that the means of happiness are worth purchasing at the cost of happiness.

We shall afterwards see that the cure of this kind of worry is such commonsense as that of Thoreau, Stevenson, and Spencer. We shall see, I hope, that, as Spencer put it, life is not for work, but work is for life; whilst life itself is for happiness — the higher the better, but, whether high or low, *happiness*. To worry about "getting on," or to multiply domestic worry in the effort to appear successful in getting on, is to lose the object of work and of life. I repeat, then, that part of our cure for worry will consist in recognising that the means of happiness are not worth purchasing at the cost of happiness.

XI

A CASE OF WORRY

No generality, as such, can ever breed conviction: that result is always reserved for the concrete, individual, observed, realisable instance. The statement of Newton's law of gravitation sounds probable enough to us: but it would mean very little to any one who had not, for himself, observed that unsupported objects fall to the earth.

It is so with generalities about worry. One might discourse at length concerning the effects of the body upon the mind, and the mind upon the body; upon worry and digestion, worry and sleep, and kindred subjects, without ever bringing home their reality to the fortunate and unobservant reader — if such there were — who had never experienced or observed the ways of worry for himself. I propose, therefore, to recount a case of worry, observed by myself, with what Mr. Gilbert makes Pooh-Bah call "a wealth of corroborative detail, calculated to give an air of artistic verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative." [1]

A young lady, enjoying excellent health, expressed alike in good spirits, sound sleep, and un-

[1] I do not vouch for this quotation to a syllable.

obtrusive digestion, became engaged to be married. The period of engagement lasted for little over a year, but during it there arose a grave cause of worry, supplemented by the uncertainty of her fiancé's prospects, resulting in the otherwise undesirable protraction of an engagement which, unlike most engagements, had no need to be tried by the test of time. During this period there was no change in physical habits; the same occupations were followed, the same diet taken, the same hours of sleep observed as had been customary. There was no physical cause of ill-health: but an overwhelming mental cause. In accordance with the general truths elsewhere stated in this book, the purely psychical cause, an altered emotional tone, produced marked results, both psychical and physical, illustrating the effects of the mind upon the body. The customary good spirits were, of course, replaced by low spirits, with frequent periods of marked depression which, at first, had none but the psychical cause — worry. This cause alone, unaided by any physical cause, or by any intellectual, as distinguished from an emotional, cause, sufficed utterly to destroy the power to sleep of the patient — as she had now become. In the first place, the sleep became shallower, as was proved by the occurrence of dreams, ultimately taking the character of nightmare. The facts illustrated the general proposition that determination of the quality of sleep may be accurately made by observation of the dreams experienced. "If a

dream was a connected series of events, and was recollected as such after waking, it was clear that the mental rest was impaired. The more coherent and the more realistic the dream, and the more directly it was concerned with events in the recent past, the less restful was the sleep in which it occurred. The quantity as well as the quality of the sleep was all-important." [1]

Later the patient found it almost impossible to sleep at all; and this condition became worse until the engagement terminated in marriage. All the psychical causes of insomnia were then immediately arrested, as we shall see; but the insomnia persisted in consequence of the physical changes which must now be described, and which were entirely due to those same psychical causes.

Another striking consequence of worry, in this case as in so many others, was an entirely new susceptibility to *fatigue*. Before her engagement this young lady was a very good walker and worker; but her worry led to the most noteworthy alteration in these respects. Lack of sound sleep was a partial explanation, no doubt; but very constantly it was observed that, at different times of the same day, fatigue was experienced, both of mind and of body, so soon as she began to worry, and vanished if her mind was diverted from its cares by any engrossing occupation or interest. Very much more might be said as to the effects of worry upon

[1] Professor Gotch, of Oxford, at the British Association, York, 1906.

working power, whether of brain or of the muscles; but this must suffice for the nonce.

Most striking of all — it cannot be called remarkable, for it is a commonplace — was the effect of worry upon the digestion, which had never before shown any sign of defect or difficulty. The oncoming of the dyspepsia due to worry was almost dramatic, for it showed itself in a sudden access of pain — never before experienced — so disabling as entirely to arrest the patient when walking. From that very date until the present time — more than four years later — the patient has never been entirely free from symptoms of dyspepsia for a single day, and scarcely for a single night. The ordinary causes of digestive pain were all excluded; there was no change or indiscretion of diet; it is certain that worry alone was its cause. The pain only recurred on a few occasions, and the dyspepsia very soon assumed the definite nervous type, dependent upon weakness of the nerves of digestion, or rather, of the cells in the central nervous system, from which those nerves spring.

Other physical consequences of this purely psychical cause are equally characteristic. For instance, the patient lost weight very markedly indeed. This, it is true, may be put down to the dyspepsia; but the same cannot be said of the extraordinary loss of hair that marked the most severe part of her illness.

This loss of hair may well be noted carefully, for it followed the custom of nervous baldness.

In this and in other cases known to the present writer — and any one may have observed them — the nutrition of the whole scalp was almost equally interfered with. Worry will very frequently affect the hair, either by causing it to fall out, or by causing it to turn grey. There is some basis, at any rate, for the familiar phrase, exaggerated though it be — "his hair turned white in a single night."

Now the commoner causes of failure of nutrition in the case of the hair are *local and circumscribed*. More usually the hair turns grey, not over the whole head equally, but at the temples — which derive their name from *tempus*, time, in allusion to this fact. Again, in the case of ordinary senile baldness, the hair is lost altogether at certain parts whilst it persists elsewhere, as every one knows. Similarly, in the cases of premature baldness, so exceedingly common nowadays amongst quite young men, the loss of hair begins in certain parts — at the crown, or at the sides of the brow, or both — and spreads therefrom as the local cause extends.

But when the hair falls out or turns grey from worry, the failure is usually general. I can recall, for instance, the case of a young man in whom worry caused the hair of the whole head to turn grey; and in the case which we are discussing the hair simply became thin; it was so thin that its bulk was reduced by quite two-thirds, but there was no bald patch. Again, in another case, I have seen

a young man's hair become exceedingly thin, and almost uniformly so, as a marked and immediate consequence of the loss of his patrimony.

Further we may note that, as in the case of the patient whose history I am describing, the loss of hair is not necessarily permanent. There has been no destruction of the hair-bulbs, as commonly occurs in cases where the scalp has been neglected; merely there has not been sufficient nervous energy available for the growth and support of the hairs. The consequence is their atrophy, due to lack of that *trophic energy,* as it is called, in virtue of which the nerves enable every part of the body, in health, to do its work. Failure of trophic energy is a highly characteristic consequence of worry in many parts of the body of more consequence than the scalp.

But when the nervous system begins to recover its tone, and enough trophic energy is available, the lost hair may be abundantly replaced; and this was so in the particular case I am describing.

Many other physical consequences of worry, more or less short of positive disease, were observed in this case; but those I have named may be taken as indicating their character, and I will not pause to enumerate them.

The patient was married and abruptly lost all her former cause for worry. It might be thought that her case would have ended in a steady recovery. But that is not the way of worry. Hitherto the case has merely illustrated the effects of

the worried mind upon the body; but now we have to take account of the missing half of a vicious circle — the effects of the body upon the mind.

I have said that the patient abruptly lost, on her wedding-day, all her *former* causes for worry, and that is true. Nor did these causes, nor any other external causes, return. But we must not assume that therefore she never worried again, even though we admit, as we must, that worry, like every other fact in the Universe, invariably has a cause. The victim of the effects of the mind upon the body now had to reckon with the effects of the body, thus injuriously modified, upon the mind. The *external* causes of worry had disappeared, but there remained *internal* causes of worry — causes which were themselves consequences of the former worry. Every fact in the Universe is both a consequence of prior causes and a cause of further consequences.

In the case in question, not merely had all the old causes of worry vanished, but the patient fully and joyously recognised the fact. She did not worry about her former worries, as some people do — the most futile and pathetic, surely, of all conceivable occupations. She fully recognised that she had "nothing to worry about," and rejoiced thereat. Just as, in the first place, she had no physical causes for worry, so now she had no psychical causes. But this is of little avail to the dyspeptic. So far as everything without her was concerned, she should have been an optimist; and

so she was, when nothing within her prevented. She regained, at such times, her characteristic high spirits, her energy and enthusiasms.

But she had to reckon with the dyspepsia which her former worry had caused. Now the case of dyspepsia is profoundly different from the case of baldness. In the latter there is no vicious circle; unless one is so foolish as to worry about one's hair, even though all else be well. Nor does nervous loss of hair lead to organic injury of the scalp.

But any nervous dyspepsia, persisting long enough, must necessarily lead to an organic dyspepsia — one that no longer depends entirely upon the nervous system for its causation. The food that is not digested, owing to purely nervous causes, necessarily acts as an irritant to the wall of the stomach. Now persistent irritation of any living membrane must lead to positive organic injury, quite distinct from mere failure of function due to lack of nervous energy. Hence, in this case as in countless others, a persistent nervous dyspepsia led to organic dyspepsia; and when the nervous causes disappeared the organic causes remained. The gastric membrane was no longer normal, and serious consequences ensued. Elsewhere I have discussed at some length the difference between organic and functional disease. Here we see how they may interact with one another. There was produced in this instance a case of organic dyspepsia with undoubted changes of a morbid kind

in the lining of the stomach — and yet its sole efficient cause was a state of mind. This is far from being the only instance in which a purely psychical cause, by leading to nervous disorder, may result in morbid states of other than nervous tissues. In other words, we have to recognise that, whilst the distinction between functional and organic disease is undoubtedly fundamental and valid, yet purely functional disease may cause organic disease; and this may persist even when its original cause has been removed. A more general recognition of the possibility of this sequence would lead us to estimate cases of persistent hysteria, for instance, at their due importance. It does not do to say of any disorder, "Oh! it is only functional," or "Oh! it is only psychical." We should realise that the persistence of such conditions is incompatible with the continuance of merely physical health. Here we have a case in point.

And now we must observe the manner in which the digestion, thus disordered, acted upon the psychical well-being of the patient whom we are considering. She had now within her a cause, only too efficient, of mental ill-health. It is the humiliating truth that scarcely in the most rational and philosophic of human beings can the mental equilibrium be maintained if the digestive equilibrium fails. It is a pitiable business that the mind should be thus at the mercy of the stomach, but it is so. In this patient, all *reasonable* causes for worry had been removed; but *unreasonable* causes had

been induced, and they were effective. The state of the digestion varied, of course, with a hundred circumstances; and the state of the mind varied with it. Just as, formerly, the variations in the state of mind produced variations in the state of the body, so now, variations in the state of the body produced variations in the state of the mind. When the digestion was at its best, organic optimism was possible, and since there was also every reason for rational optimism, the patient was happy at such times. But when the digestion was unsatisfactory, and the organic sense of well-being was therefore destroyed, the patient began to worry, even though no rational cause for anything but optimism existed.

Be it remembered that worry due to internal causes always finds some external pretext to warrant it; there may be, as in this case, no adequate pretext, but something can always be found. The case is precisely the same with irritability or bad temper of internal origin. The man who worries because his indigestion has interfered with his organic sense of well-being never acknowledges explicitly that he is worrying because he is out of sorts; he must always provide himself with some external circumstance to serve as a pretext for worry. The man who is made irritable by gout never simply "is irritable"; he always vents his irritation *on something*. A noisy child, a delayed meal, the colour of his wife's dress, any the most trivial and inconsequent thing will serve; but there

must be something. The fact that it does not matter what, and that something can always be found, is all-significant. This morning the ostensible cause may be the incivility of a servant; this afternoon he explains his irritation on the ground that he cannot stand an obsequious servant; at one moment he will say, "I wish the devil you would n't contradict me," and at the next, "I wish the devil you would n't always agree with me; have n't you a mind of your own?" In short whatever his fellows do is wrong; which would be absurd did we not realise that the unchanging cause of the irritation is within him, and is independent of what is without.

Similarly with the worry that is caused by indigestion. It must always have an external pretext for its existence, but it does not matter a straw what that pretext may be. When this patient's digestion went wrong, she would worry about whatever happened or whatever did not happen. She very soon realised perfectly the state of affairs; just as the angry man who savagely kicks a stone realises that on no ordinary occasion would he have suspected it of lying there on purpose to trip him up. This patient was perfectly well aware that the objects of her worry were quite unworthy of a moment's least concern — but her recognition of this counted for nothing at all. Such recognition is an act of the reason; but we are not controlled by the reason, and nothing in the world is less relevant to the emotional state of our minds.

Your reason tells you that the non-arrival of an expected letter is not worth worrying about; that, indeed, your correspondent could not be expected to reply so soon; or it may even tell you that you would not have worried about the matter for a moment had it been yesterday when you were well, and not to-day when you are out of sorts; you admit the propriety of your reason's observations and then you simply ignore them. Thus this patient would allow the merest trifles to prey upon her mind when her digestion was out of order, though she fully realised that this and this alone was the cause of her anxiety.

Here we see illustrated, in the fullest degree, that action and reaction between mind and body, which most perfectly demonstrates the meaning of the phrase, *a vicious circle*. In this case, which followed an absolutely typical course, a purely mental disturbance caused a physical disorder, and this produced a mental disturbance similar to the original one, but utterly different in causation. The problem now was to break the circle by attacking the physical disorder; and the difficulty of doing so depended upon the fact that it *was* a vicious circle which had to be dealt with. For all the physical means — such as regulation of the diet, drugs, massage, and so forth — appropriate to the physical disorder, had to contest the ground, inch by inch, with the opposing influence of the worry which that disorder had engendered, and which in turn tended to perpetuate it. In the case

which I am describing, patience and prudence and practical philosophy ultimately won the day, and the patient was restored, after years of suffering, psychical and physical, to something like her former health; but my pen must fail to express the distressing cost of the patient's experience. After all, though youth is resilient and hard to beat, and though such a long lane may at last reveal a turning, nothing can compensate for the years that might have been — should have been — wholly happy, and were not. There was so much lost, and it is lost for ever.

XII

WORRY IN CHILDHOOD

For convenience we have been studying our subject as if the worrier were always an adult man; but now it is time for us to remember the special cases of women and children. These are worthy of separate study, since they show special characters, have a special significance, and require specially adapted treatment.

I propose first of all to deal with the worrying child, since this subject precedes the other in logical order.

The reader is doubtless acquainted with the celebrated doctrine that the history of the developing individual is, in general, a modified recapitulation of the history of the race to which it belongs; each individual "climbs its own ancestral tree." This doctrine applies to our present case. Self-consciousness, the power of "looking before and after," is a very late and recent acquirement of our species; and, like other such, it develops only at a relatively late stage in the history of each one of us. It is evidently impossible to conceive of a worrying baby. The idea of a baby excludes the possibility of worry. Very slowly there emerges the power of self-consciousness in virtue of which

the child is — or becomes — human. At first the baby begins to recognise its hands and features as its own, and later it identifies its feet as part of itself. Then it completely identifies itself as an individual, comparable to its father or mother; but it does not at once make the crowning identification of that individual with *itself*. At first it says, "Baby loves you"; some time must pass before it can make the first assertion of the supreme dignity of our kind by saying, "*I* love you."

When self-consciousness is acquired, worry becomes possible. But we find, as might be expected, that the child does not exercise this faculty of projecting the self into the past or the future in anything like the degree that is common to its elders. Indeed it is fair to say that a child has no business to worry at any time. Its sleep and digestion should be perfect; it has no worldly cares, has no interest in a Stock and Share List, need take no thought for the morrow. There is such a thing, unquestionably, as normal worry in the case of adult men and women; but there is no such thing as normal worry in the case of a child.

Nevertheless, children do worry, and in so doing afford a spectacle alike pitiable and unnatural. Whatever may be expected at other ages, childhood should be "sunny"; and a worrying child must be a source of distress to every one who has a heart for children.

It is easy, I fancy, to recognise the two principal causes of worry in childhood — and it is good to

recognise that, since there is no *natural* reason for worry in children, its causes, factitious and man-made, are easily removable.

I have said that children but rarely exercise the faculty of self-consciousness. A child should scarcely look before and after; it should live in the present. But the two meanings of the word self-conscious may lead to confusion here. Every one knows that children may be extremely self-conscious in the popular sense of the word — may, for instance, be exceedingly shy with strangers. Self-consciousness in this popular sense is often, I believe, due to the unwisdom of parents. I fancy that parental wisdom may not inaccurately be gauged by the simple, un-self-conscious ease with which an unsophisticated child will approach a stranger, or even enter a crowded drawing-room.

But the fact remains that children, whether by nature or imitation or suggestion or what not, are very liable to an artificial exaggeration of the faculty of self-consciousness — and this in two distinct directions.

The first, and by far the least important, is concerned with the child's fear of ridicule. As every one knows, this is very characteristic of childhood. The small boy who fears to be ridiculous at a new school, because he cannot catch a ball, or has an unusual name or appearance, may suffer agonies of worry — none the less painful because in his elders' eyes the occasion seems unworthy of them. This applies more especially, no doubt, to sensitive,

highly-evolved children — but such children are, of course, the most precious members of their kind. One cannot appeal to big boys, that they should cease from teasing little ones, but one can certainly appeal to parents, that they should do what in them lies to spare their children the misery, highly injurious to their physical, mental, and moral development, that accrues from excessive exposure to ridicule. In the case of sensitive children, very little exposure indeed may prove to be excessive.

I have not specially referred to girls, but what I have said certainly applies to them. I fear that big girls are no more merciful to little ones than are big boys to little boys; and an eccentric costume, provided by a thoughtless parent, — who takes precious good care not to wear last season's sleeves herself, — may embitter the life of a girl for weeks. I have blamed big boys and girls for their deliberate cruelty in these matters; but it may also be remembered that similar cruelty is wrought, though unwittingly, by the careless remarks of adults, who forget the sensitiveness of children to ridicule, the keenness of their hearing, and the retentiveness of their memories.

And now let us turn to a far more serious and important cause of worry in children. This is *religious worry,* to which I elsewhere devote a special chapter. But here I must refer especially to the subject of religious worry in childhood, since it constitutes the most distressing and injurious kind of worry at this time of life.

Religion is most emphatically for a self-conscious creature. A dog has no need of a religion. Man, "with such large discourse, looking before and after," cannot do without some sort of religion — unless he be merely anthropoid rather than truly human. It follows that the child, scarcely self-conscious in the true sense, but living in and for the present, — as a child should, if it is to become a healthy and worthy adult — is essentially an irreligious, or rather, a non-religious creature. The religious period will assuredly come in any case. As surely as puberty and adolescence arrive, with their intense discovery and contemplation of the self, so surely will the religious consciousness develop. There exists not the smallest occasion for the endeavour to anticipate this period. The religious parent need not be concerned who discovers that his child is just a little pagan. The normal healthy child is such a little pagan, and should be. Nevertheless, when the critical period arrives — and it does well to arrive late — the religious consciousness will infallibly develop itself, though no sign of it seemed to exist before.

Now, in the first place, let us make the preliminary note that all psychologists — and every parent should be a psychologist in his or her measure — are agreed as to the desirability of postponing the period of puberty — or, at any rate, scrupulously avoiding anything that will tend to hasten its coming. The sexual and the religious life are so connected — at any rate during the developmental

period — that premature religiosity is apt to lead to premature puberty, and thus to interference with the normal course of development. This important subject is no immediate concern of mine in the present volume, and therefore I can spend no further time upon it. I can merely take the opportunity to remind the thoughtful parent of the indisputable facts which I state, and to recommend them to his consideration. If he be really a thoughtful parent he will thank me for recommending to him in this connection the study of Prof. Stanley Hall's book on "Adolescence," and Prof. William James's equally valuable book on "The Varieties of Religious Experience."

And now as to the far more important matter of the causation of religious worry in children. In his great work on the Philosophy of Religion, Prof. Harald Höffding, of the University of Copenhagen, describes religion as having been, in the past, like a pillar of fire, moving in advance of humanity, and urging it onwards; but as being, in our own time, like an ambulance that travels in the rear of humanity, and picks up and tends those who have fallen by the way. For the child religion has neither of these functions. Let us essay, as best we may, the all but impossible task of understanding what religion means and is worth to a child.

Religion has two contrasted aspects: one of consolation, guidance, help, encouragement in the battle of life; and another that is sinister, mina-

tory, terrible. The latter aspect of religion is daily falling into discredit in our day; though for ages past it has been the dominant aspect of religion, and is or was the only aspect worth mentioning in the case of primitive religions.

Now for the consolatory, peace-bringing, worry-destroying aspect of religion a child has very little use. The existence of the normal child is already happy, free from worry and care, and without dark anticipations. Thus this aspect of religion has little influence upon a child. The time has not yet come when its value can be appreciated. Come it surely will — but it has not come yet.

And — whether or not because this aspect of religion is seen to influence a child but little — this is the aspect which is commonly subordinated in the presentation of religion to a child. In general, religion does not appear to a child as a consoler, a source of joy and the peace which passeth all understanding. Let him who passed his childhood in Scotland, or in a Puritan, Evangelical, or Calvinistic home, testify to the truth of this assertion. Was religion to him a source of joy or of fear?

The truth is that we tend to preserve for the "benefit" of our children a conception of religion which we have ourselves outgrown. The religion which adult men and women need is not one that adds new fear, worries, or terrors to life. Such a religion has no survival-value for the adult; it does not serve his life, and therefore it cannot survive. In these days of headlong, fearful, hard-

working life, when humanity is multiplying so rapidly on an earth that is meanwhile ever shrinking, this aspect or conception of religion is quickly losing the survival-value which it once had as a moral agent — and it must shortly go. It makes no appeal to us; it is a moralising agent only in the case of those whose psychical development is relatively small.

But we keep it for our children. Or even if we represent religion to them in both of its aspects, the minatory aspect is that which naturally appeals to them. For the other a sunny, careless child has little use; but this makes an appeal to its imagination and to its capacity for terror. The " devil," who is to us merely a convenient name wherewith to express irritation or surprise, is to a child a terrible reality.

Prof. Alexander Bain of Aberdeen, the great psychologist, records in his Autobiography his childish conception of the Deity. He seemed to see in the heavens a replica of a sort of desk, upon which lay a large open book — probably a ledger in the original — such as he had seen on earth. At this desk sat the Deity, pen in hand, His all-seeing eye fixed upon hapless little Alec, His right hand ready to record, in indelible characters awaiting the Day of Judgment, the least wrongful act or thought that might emerge from the heart of a boy. Than this picture, no more appalling and horrible indictment could be conceived, of the lamentable system of religious education to which poor young Bain had been subjected.

Again, many a reader must remember almanacs and the like, at the top of which was depicted a large and awful eye, to suggest the principal exercise of the Almighty Eavesdropper. And I, for one, retain a vivid recollection of one night when, at the age of seven or eight, I started up in bed, covered with great drops of perspiration — I remember the dripping of them — because I believed that I had committed the unpardonable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Many are the sensitive children who have been haunted by that awful phrase, "the unpardonable sin."

Yet again, I recall my childish horror of such phrases as "the second death," and "the worm that dieth not"; and I shall never forget my first conception of hell. It was a circular hell, dark but yet luridly luminous, with sky-high, smooth, and absolutely precipitous walls; there was no climbing them. And eternity was passed in an endless passage along this closed circle. The reader may laugh; but how many are the children whose young imaginations have been forced to such conceptions by the carelessness of parents, or the unintentional brutality of their "spiritual advisers." Undoubtedly the time has passed for ever when the Scottish child dreaded the approach of Sunday not merely because of its dulness — unrelieved by the teaching that Heaven would be a perpetual Sunday — but because of the utter horror which the good old-fashioned Scottish sermon was calculated, designed, intended to inspire in the hearts

of young and old alike. Yet children will form their own conceptions on these matters, and the parent, who is at a loss to imagine what ails a child who should be happy, will do well to inquire whether the explanation is not to be found in religious worry.

In many cases — though it was certainly not so in mine — it is only too easy to recognise why the worry-causing conception of religion is so prominent in the minds of children. In all ages human beings have had the choice of two means by which to govern one another — fear and love. Each is effective in certain cases. The latter has the disadvantage that it requires love and patience on the part of him who would govern. As every one of us must happily know — whether from personal experience or by observation — love may be absolutely, gloriously, triumphantly successful for this purpose. Charles Darwin, to quote a classic instance, records that, in the upbringing of his children — now famous men of science — he used love alone. The only reward was the father's smile; the only punishment was the withholding of it. No rod or birch, no boxes of chocolates, could have succeeded better; or a millionth part as well. But in order to rule by love one must love — even with something of the love that endureth all things and never faileth. And, again, the capacity for love must be present in those whom you would govern. The method is inapplicable in the case of a wild beast; it is even inapplic-

able in only too many human beings — though there is probably always the might-have-been in such cases.

Take, then, the case of the ordinary parent, who is a parent merely because certain physiological consequences tend to follow certain physiological causes; or take the case of the hireling nurse. The utter patience of love is not available in such cases; or the would-be governor may be such — a drunken father, for instance — as cannot rule by love because it is inconceivable that he should evoke the love of any child towards him, even were he capable of feeling love towards the child. Such a nurse or parent must plainly use the method of rule by fear, since rule he must, and rule by love is impossible.

And religion is prostituted to this end. *Corruptio optimi pessima* — the corruption of the best is the worst corruption — and the proverb is true in this case. The All-seeing eye intent upon the peccadilloes of childhood, the recording angel, — whose record of good deeds is perfunctory but who never misses a bad one, — the fear of hell, the consciousness of "sin" — all these furnish effective weapons in the rule of childhood by fear.

And so the children worry. Before now children have been driven to suicide by religious worry — by this abominable prostitution of the power which should make earth Heaven. The little boy who steals a chocolate-cream from a forbidden box, or the little girl who forgets to say her prayers or

shams a headache at church-time, — in such, if they be sensitive children, either ruled by fear using religion as one of its weapons, or else curious and eager, reading the Bible independently, and mercilessly applying certain of its passages to themselves, there may be engendered a degree of religious worry that may blight the young life or distort it for all future years. To those who, thoughtlessly or selfishly or even with the highest and most deliberate intention, are responsible for such cruelty we may most solemnly quote the words of One who loved little children: "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Some may answer that this is all very well, but that children must be taught to be conscientious; and to be conscientious is to be susceptible to worry over misdeeds. Certainly I am the last person in the world to suggest that its moral education is not a vital matter in the case of every child. But the government of a child by fear is brutal and dangerous, no matter whether the fear be concerned with this life or the next; there is no valid distinction. Parents are apt to forget the vividness of the child's imagination and the terrible character of its creations under the influence of what is called religious teaching. Thus many a parent who would shudder at the notion of brutally treating his child's body by way of correction, will not hesitate brutally to

maltreat its mind; which, in the case of many children, may be a far graver cruelty than the other; its soul being more sensitive than its skin.

Furthermore, there is the future to think of. If the child be governed by love — whether directed to its parents or to such Deity as a child is capable of conceiving, or to both — the psychical changes and the intellectual development of later years offer no menace to its moral consciousness. But if the more facile method of government by religious fear be employed, there is to-morrow to reckon with. The child's hell and Satan may be real enough to effect that obedience which — for your own convenience — you regard as the chief virtue of childhood; and it is very improbable that you have sufficient imagination (if you have used this method) to enable you to realise the agonies of religious worry from which your child has suffered — especially in the dark. But the child will as surely outgrow this crudely materialistic creed as the race has outgrown it. The time will come when your child will worry about Satan no more than you do — and when its idea of Hell will become at any rate as vague and insubstantial, if not inoperative, as your own. Except in comparatively few cases, the child will not be governed by supernatural fears for ever; and the question arises whether, when he puts away the old notions with other childish things, he may not find himself without any moral anchorage. If this be so, at whose door will his sins lie?

Sometimes the future may have another fate in store. Some physical illness at adolescence, or the presence of some inherent mental flaw, may lead to derangement of the mind — temporary or permanent. Then the religious worry that was developed and fostered in childhood will reassert itself in a degree, the horror of which even the unimaginative parent will be able to realise. Your innocent daughter may have to be fed, for weeks at a time, by a tube passed through her nose, because the seed sown years before has fructified in the belief that she has committed the unpardonable sin, is for ever a castaway, and is therefore unworthy to eat. These cases of religious melancholia in young people are quite common. I am not prepared to say that their efficient cause is to be found in the religious worry of earlier years; but it is quite certain, first, that such religious worry predisposes to the melancholia of which the exciting cause is perhaps merely influenza; and, second, that the early teaching *entirely* determines the peculiarly horrible and distressing form which the melancholia assumes; and if melancholia of any kind be grievous enough, religious melancholia is grievous in the very last degree. Consider how different the course, intensity, and duration of the illness might have been, if "religion," instead of aggravating it, had been the true religion which might well have proved either a complete preventive, or at any rate the most potent means of cure.

XIII

DOMESTIC WORRY

THE responsible head of a household is apt too lightly to assume that he alone has any occasion or excuse for worry. It is a revelation to the young married man to discover that part of his wife's pleasure in a holiday lies in the fact that not only does she not know what is coming for dinner but she has had no concern in ordering it. I observe also that, though one thinks it absurd for one's wife to worry about a mere dinner, one expects unlimited variety thereat and is apt to grumble if expectation be disappointed.

I have called this chapter Domestic Worry, and not Worry and Woman, because the only kind of worry that is characteristic of woman as distinguished from man is domestic worry. A woman has most or all of a man's causes for worry, but these do not need special consideration with reference to her; she has, in addition, a kind of worry which he has not. Indeed, it may be said that women worry about the affairs of the home in order that men may not. It is supposed — and men lend their able support to this convenient notion — that a man's cares are so many and contrived on so heroic a scale that at least he must be spared

any worry at home; the petty details of domesticity must show only their smooth side to him.

And since the good wife sees to it that her mate is never bothered with domestic affairs, he is only too apt to think that such affairs involve no worry — and he is gravely in error.

The average healthy business man should be able, as we observe elsewhere, to leave his business behind him when he comes home. His return to his own hearth should mean the beginning of that holiday-period or time of freedom from worry, which I believe to be a necessary part of every well-spent day. His wife is undoubtedly right in wishing to ensure him the enjoyment of this period; but it by no means follows that her own case is always an easy one.

It is notorious that "a woman's work is never done," and this is true even of the lady who does no work in the ordinary sense of that word. Such a lady may provide many sources of worry for herself, in the course of entertaining, or trying to outshine her neighbours and friends, or trying to make a braver show in the world than her husband's income warrants. My concern here, however, is not with such worries, but with the worries which are inevitable in the life of the most sensible woman — the domestic worry which is inseparable from domesticity. When Emerson declared, in his "English Traits," that their domesticity was the tap-root of all the powers exhibited by the English people, he spoke a profound truth, — true

not merely of England alone. Domestic Worry is therefore a subject worthy of the wisest pen and the wisest reader, and need not be disdained of us.

Domestic worry both makes a woman older and makes her look older. I have no great liking for the woman whose best friend is her mirror, but I am not so foolish as to imagine that the details of a woman's appearance are unimportant — affecting as they do her own happiness, the happiness of her husband, and therefore the happiness of her children. Let us, therefore, first consider the effects of worry upon a woman's face. In so doing, I avail myself of what is incomparably the greatest book ever written upon the subject with which it deals — Charles Darwin's "Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals."

Certain facial characters are commonly seen in the various emotional states which Darwin enumerates as "Low Spirits, Anxiety, Grief, Dejection, Despair." Primarily, of course, these characters are merely temporary, disappearing with the emotion which they express. But the frequent repetition of any facial expression causes permanent alterations in the expression, and these correspond, with, and suggest to the beholder, the emotional state that has predominated; so that the man who is always laughing comes to look "a jolly man," the thinker a thoughtful man, and the woman who worries begins to wear a worried look that persists.

When a woman worries, the muscles of her face

tend to lose the "tone" which is characteristic of healthy muscles, and thus "the lips, cheeks, and lower jaw all sink downwards from their own weight. Hence all the features are lengthened; and the face of a person who hears bad news is said to fall . . . the eyes become dull and lack expression. . . . The eyebrows not rarely are rendered oblique, which is due to their inner ends being raised. This produces peculiarly formed wrinkles on the forehead, which are very different from those of a simple frown; though in some cases a frown alone may be present. The corners of the mouth are drawn downwards, which is so universally recognised as a sign of being out of spirits, that it is almost proverbial."[1]

Darwin goes on to describe in detail the behaviour of the muscles which cause these wrinkles and says that "they may be called, for the sake of brevity, the grief-muscles." Equally correct would it be to call them the worry-muscles. Further he says what is of special interest to us: "As far as I have been able to observe, the grief-muscles are brought into action much more frequently by children and women than by men. They are rarely acted on, at least with grown-up persons, from bodily pain, but almost exclusively from mental distress." Darwin also observes that this expression is to be found in certain works of art, such as the famous statue of the Laocoön and Fra Angel-

[1] Darwin, "Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals," popular edition, pp. 181, 182.

ico's "Descent from the Cross," in Florence. Sir James Crichton-Browne informed Darwin that these muscles "may constantly be seen in energetic action in cases of melancholia, and especially of hypochondria; and that the *persistent*[1] lines or furrows, due to their habitual contraction, are characteristic of the physiognomy of the insane belonging to these two classes."

To say that a person is "down in the mouth" is synonymous with saying that he is out of spirits; and the permanent depression of the corners of the mouth is characteristic of the woman who worries. This is very characteristic, also, of the melancholic insane, as many observers have noted. Darwin observes: "It is remarkable how small a depression of the corners of the mouth gives to the countenance an expression of low spirits or dejection, so that an extremely slight contraction of these muscles would be sufficient to betray this state of mind."

It is time, perhaps, that some one should draw the attention of women to the psychical factor of good looks. Now, as ever, women are concerned about their appearance, and it ill becomes any man who knows a pretty face from a plain one, and knows which he prefers, to jeer at them for this. When Dr. Arthur Evans unearthed in Crete the palace of King Minos, dating from an age when Moses was still in the womb of time, he discovered that the Minoan women of that remote age used

[1] Italics mine.

corsets and cosmetics just for all the world like the women of thirty-five centuries after them. But the observation of any man — whether of the women whose faces he himself admires, or of the women whom he finds to be admired — will teach him a lesson which is also taught by the contemporary accounts of most of the fascinating women of history. It is not the form of her nose, nor the smoothness of her skin, nor the length of her eyelashes, that endows a woman with the empire that she loves. Such beauty is only skin-deep. But there is another beauty — to which Herbert Spencer alluded when he said, "The saying that beauty is but skin-deep, is but a skin-deep saying." And the determining factor of the beauty which age cannot wither nor custom stale is the factor of mind. Here, as everywhere else, mind is the only important matter — appearances notwithstanding. There is no cosmetic yet known, nor will any such be revealed by the chemistry of the future, that can for a moment compare with a merry heart, a lucid mind, and a loving soul. And of all the ravages that can be worked in a fair face there are none against which your chemistry is more impotent — and your electricity and massage and chin-straps and depilatories and their like — than the ravages of worry. Let the reader look out, in the next crowd in which he finds himself, for a woman's face marked in mouth and brow as I have so minutely described with Darwin's aid, and he will recognise that one might as well attempt to cure

a cancer with sticking plaster as attempt to erase with any cosmetic these indelible lines.

The beauty that is more than skin-deep, the beauty that lasts, and the beauty that counts in the long run, is a creation of the mind, and by the mind alone can it be destroyed.

We all know these things; we have all read that the dominant women of history had a beauty not merely cutaneous, but psychical. Yet women habitually ignore what they know, or should know, so well. I will add no more words of my own to propositions which merely need statement to find immediate acceptance; but I would remind the reader of one of the most poignant and perfect poems ever written. Every one has read the five poems on Lucy, which Wordsworth wrote in Germany. In the longest and greatest of these, "Three years she grew in sun and shower," the poet pictures Nature as planning and describing the means by which she is to make a perfect woman. The child is to be a friend of the stars and the brooks, "And beauty born of murmuring sound shall pass into her face." Not in crowded, worried cities, but in communion with Nature, placid and benign, is the child to acquire that beauty of expression which will endear her to all that have seeing eyes, and, at the last, will look out even from her shroud.

. . . . . .

That worry shortens life is, of course, a commonplace; and I have already said that worry not

merely makes a woman look older but actually makes her older. The same is true of a man; and so, also, is what I have said regarding the effects of worry upon the face, though in his case they are of smaller importance. Nor need I say anything specially here, regarding the effects of domestic worry upon a woman's health, since these effects are in no way peculiar to her sex.

But it is necessary to consider with some care the varieties of domestic worry. Servants, children, and finance, I suppose, constitute the chief causes of offence. Regarding the last I will say nothing, since it is not peculiar to domestic worry, and has the same causes and most of the same consequences in a woman's case as in a man's. But servants and children are especially the woman's concern, and the time will be well occupied if we can say anything useful about them here.

Now the general proposition which I would submit is that, in both cases, the occasion for worry, when worry arises, is more frequently to be found in the woman herself than in the servants or the children whom she blames. Let us first consider the servants.

The average mistress, having only an average imagination, is scarcely able to realise how dull and undesirable is the life of the average servant. It is doubtless better for the morals of the ordinary girl of the class from which domestic servants are drawn that she should become a housemaid or "general" than a factory-hand, and it is probably

better for her body. But the life, as regulated by the ordinary mistress, is a poor one; and such a mistress is nowadays experiencing much difficulty in finding good servants or in keeping them when found. But it is a significant fact that, though similar means of selection be employed in different cases, one mistress will constantly have occasion to worry about her servants, whilst another comes across "treasures," and is able to retain them. Doctors know how high is the proportion of illness amongst domestic servants, how liable they are to bloodlessness and varicose veins, flat feet, consumption, and heart weakness. They fill the general hospitals, they furnish a large proportion of his patients to the doctor in poor practice, and from their scanty earnings they combine to swell the enormous incomes of the owners of patent medicines. Probably a majority of all mistresses attempt to exact from their female servants an amount of work of which the average female organism is incapable, meanwhile allowing an amount of time "out" that is quite inadequate for recuperation — the more so because, being scanty, and the working time being so dull, it is usually spent in places of amusement as abominably ventilated as nearly all our public resorts are. Thus the sympathy of the doctor is with the servant rather than the mistress, and he is inclined to think that the worry about servants from which the average mistress is rarely free is well earned and quite unworthy of his condolence. Regarding

domestic worry about servants, then, I would say to the average mistress that, until she begins to treat her servants as she might reasonably expect to be treated were she a servant, her worry is thoroughly well deserved, and that the contemplation thereof is a source of gratification to me and to all who have had sufficient experience — especially experience in medical practice — to enable them to realise how hard the lot of the average domestic servant is.

Finally, let us consider domestic worry about children. The modern solution of this problem is similar to Mr. Wells's proposed solution for the servant-problem — do without them. This is abundantly proved by the steadily falling birth-rate of all civilised countries except Japan — and Russia, if that unhappy land falls within the category. People who do not know sometimes suggest that the fall in our birth-rate is due to a decline of national fertility or to other physiological causes; but people who do know are well aware that parentage is declining because it is unpopular, and that the one or two child marriage is very rarely an instance of acquired sterility, but is a phenomenon the origin of which is to be traced to the deliberate volition of men and women.

What, then, is the judgment which must be passed upon the popular remedy or preventive for the kind of domestic worry that is caused by the care and upbringing of children? Many difficulties and uncertainties are to be encountered in the

study of this subject; but one thing at least is certain — that critics who express an unqualified approval, and those who express an unqualified disapproval, are both out of court. Such a judgment as that of the bachelor Bishop, with his income of ten thousand pounds a year, merely serves to add to the gaiety of nations, which is, of course, a service of sorts.

If ever it is true that circumstances alter cases, it is true here. Let us consider certain familiar and well-defined sets of circumstances.

In the first place, there are the circumstances of the housewife, already over-worked and burdened with the care of a "large family." Any further increase of her responsibilities may definitely urge her into the grave towards which she is already speeding far too fast. The doctrines of ecclesiasticism and its votaries, who quote the command, "Be fruitful and multiply," would here have the effect not merely of injuring or killing the mother, but of thereby injuring her husband, *and the children whom she already possesses.* After all, there are physical limits to what even a devoted mother can accomplish; and it is surely better to bring up four children by a mother's loving care than to leave ten motherless.

In a word, it is my deliberate and responsible conviction that there is a vast deal of domestic worry, borne by women and occasioned by the size of their families, which should have been prevented

by practical recognition of the facts which I have stated. The truth is that the doctrine, " Be fruitful and multiply," as taught for many centuries past, is a fruit of that horrible thing which men now call militarism. The powers that be must have food for powder, and to this end the birth-rate must be kept as high as possible. But the era of militarism is coming to an end, even though Europe be still an armed camp; and its doctrines will be replaced by others, saner, more humane, more solicitous of human life and its worth, more appreciative of quality and less appreciative of quantity. A wilderness of bishops notwithstanding, I for one will dare to assert that much domestic worry, with all its disastrous results for mothers and children alike, will be prevented in years to come, to the lasting benefit of all concerned.

But there is another answer to be returned in other circumstances, and the disastrous fact is that hitherto it is only the very few who have attempted to discriminate. If we examine and compare the birth-rates of different classes, as, for instance, by contrasting the birth-rate of Kensington with that of Whitechapel, we find, in general, that the less the excuse or warrant for a low birth-rate, the lower the birth-rate is. Where the circumstances are such that we know women to be suffering from domestic worry that shortens their lives, and thus injures the rising generation — for whom the influence of the mother transcends all other influences — there we find the birth-rate exceedingly,

excessively high. On the other hand, where there is room for the children, leisure for their care, abundance of money for their up-bringing, and no occasion whatever for any substantial worry on account of them, there we find the birth-rate exceedingly, excessively low. The wives of the prosperous classes have come to the conclusion, it would appear, that motherhood is not worth the trouble which it involves, and to them the rebuke of the Bishop of London is surely applicable.

For it is true that, no matter how prosperous and favourable the circumstances be, the upbringing of children involves some worry. Let us, then, briefly enumerate the various means by which this worry may be prevented, and then let us inquire as to the consequences.

First of all, and most effectively, these worries may be prevented by renunciation of the opportunity of parenthood altogether, as we have seen. Thus relief from domestic worry is purchased — but at what cost?

The price is *national* or racial, and *personal*. The nation or the race must pay, for the duty of its continuance is relegated to its lower classes. Both on the score of heredity and on the score of environment the national consequences are disastrous. They are disastrous on the score of heredity because the thus-purchased freedom from domestic worry of the wives of the prosperous classes means that the better stocks of the nation contribute less than their share, whilst the inferior

stocks contribute more than their share, to the replenishment of the race. My friend Mr. Francis Galton, the distinguished cousin of the immortal Darwin, has proved that individual ability and worth are largely determined by inheritance. His scheme of Eugenics proposes that the best individuals in a nation must be the chief factors in the upkeep of the birth-rate; but the current practice of purchasing freedom from domestic worry is precisely the reverse of what he desires. Thus the freedom of selfish individuals from worry is purchased at the threatened cost of racial deterioration.

But on the score of environment, also, the national consequences are disastrous; for where the environment is good, well fitted for the successful nurture of children, there the children do not appear; whereas they appear only too abundantly, not only in perpetuation of the inferior stocks, but also in the circumstances — such as poverty and over-crowding — where children cannot properly be reared. Hence another potent cause of national danger.

And, as I have said, the price at which freedom from domestic worry is purchased is also *personal*. The renunciation of the joys of parenthood, because its worries are held to more than counterbalance them, involves an injury to the character of the selfish individual. It injures marriage and married life, rendering it incomplete, and depriving it of its great opportunity for the ripening and ennoblement of character.

I submit that relief from domestic worry is not worth purchasing on these terms.

Secondly, these domestic worries may be prevented, as many a mother mistakenly thinks, by neglect to perform that maternal duty which Nature has indicated in the person of every woman. Doctors know that the proportion of mothers who *cannot* nurse their babies is really very small; but the proportion of those in the prosperous classes who *will not* is large and constantly increasing. The price paid for the shirking of this source of worry or inconvenience is constantly expressed by the actual death of the baby, or permanent injury to its health in consequence of malnutrition: whilst the neglect of this duty inflicts an irreparable injury upon the moral nature of the mother — an injury which is only too likely to react for evil upon the remote future as well as upon the immediate future of her child, should it survive.

Thereafter much domestic worry may be averted by the mother in prosperous circumstances, by the unlimited employment of hirelings to look after her children. This will leave her freedom for the following of her own desires; incidentally it can scarcely fail to injure her children. She would not like it said that she neglects their education — yet the child's nurse constitutes a vastly important factor therein. Elsewhere I have defined education as "the provision of an environment" — the dominant factor of which is the child's constant companion. The mother who prefers a hireling

to herself as her child's companion admits either that she regards herself as inferior to the purchased nurse for the purpose of her child's education, or else that the trouble of providing the child with the best companion does not seem to her worth the candle. It is an unpleasant dilemma, but there are only too many mothers to whom it is applicable.

The necessity for constant care of a child must necessarily become irksome, of course, and the opportunity of sending it away to school, even for only a few hours a day, is heartily and very often prematurely welcomed. But when the child of either sex has reached the age of seven years the various elements of its brain structure are in their place, and it is ready to begin what is commonly understood by the word "education." If the school be wisely chosen, — even at the cost of no small worry, perhaps, to the mother, — and if the moral character of the child, even at a similar cost, has previously been well trained, the beginning of school life will undoubtedly mean to the mother a very considerable relaxation of worry and anxiety regarding her child. But if she has not worried as she should, either in preparing the child for school or in choosing a school for the child, she may receive her deserts in the shape of more trouble, anxiety, annoyance and worry than ever, when the school period arrives.

A few years later there comes the powerful and popular temptation to which many readers will be

surprised to find me applying that sinister term — I mean the boarding-school.

If there be sufficient money to spare there is no question that the sending of a boy or a girl to a boarding-school will save the mother a great deal of worry. In short, she pays some one else to worry for her. The reader will observe that I treat this subject under Domestic Worry, and that I refer to the mother rather than the father. I do so because it is my belief that the mother rather than the father is the vital factor and the naturally appointed factor in the care and education of a child of either sex for many years. This always remains true, of course, of the girl, but it remains true of the boy also, until, at any rate, he begins definitely to approach the period during which he will develop into a man. And in criticising the boarding-school system of avoiding domestic worry it is especially the mother of whom I think, in the case of a boy particularly. It is the loss of the womanly influence — which is at its highest, need I say, in the maternal influence — that constitutes the most serious and fatal of all the many serious and fatal objections that may be urged against the boarding-school system. I will freely admit that boarding-schools are an unfortunate necessity for children whose parents are dead or drunken or exiled or otherwise incapable of performing the supreme duties of parenthood, but I am only in line with medical men and practical psychologists and educationists generally, when I say that the

boarding-school, as an institution for boys and girls whose parents are living and capable of performing the duties of parenthood, is an evil thing. Furthermore, I honestly believe that boarding-schools are consequences of worry — invented for its avoidance. The long and the short of it is that it requires care and love and patience to look after one's own children, and that at best this can never be accomplished without much anxiety, trouble, and worry. The well-to-do parent is at least aware of this elementary fact. The necessary cheque is written, and the honourable and responsible burden is transferred to hired shoulders. It is an effective means for the fashionable mother, whereby she may dispose of a chief source of domestic worry. It is true that there are always the holidays, which are a nuisance; but one can usually get away from home at such times, and when they come to their welcome end one can heave a sigh of relief as the youngster is safely packed off in a train for another few months to come.

We have seen elsewhere that worry may be normal or morbid. Much domestic worry, I insist, is normal worry. The selfish avoidance of it works disaster in a woman's character and produces that lamentable decadence of motherhood which is so characteristic of certain classes in our time and civilisation. "What has posterity done for me?" asked Napoleon — a highly characteristic question. The modern mother only too often acts as if she

had put some such question regarding her immediate posterity — her own children. She recks nothing for the price which she pays for the avoidance of worry — or rather, she estimates it by the cheque-book method. The cheque-book, however, furnishes no calculus of character, and does not express the birth-rate of the well-to-do classes, nor the fact that these classes are in continuous process of extinction and replacement from below. In order to support by an unbiassed and highly qualified witness, the estimate of boarding-schools which is so commonly held amongst medical men and psychologists, I will quote the words of an article by Dr. Gray, the Headmaster of Bradfield College. They are to be found in the "Hibbert Journal" for July, 1906, and the most remarkable fact about them is that the writer shows no signs elsewhere in his article of any recognition of their gravity. I have read them again and again in amazement. Had I dared I might have written them myself, except that I might have failed to express myself with such force. It must be remembered, says Dr. Gray: —

"(1) That we have to deal with a society of immature minds and plastic morality.

"(2) That this society is artificially constituted; that is, it does not proceed on the lines of family relations, which nature intended should be followed throughout life, but is isolated and 'monastic.'

"Here, then, at the most critical stage of a boy's life, at a time when, along with violent physical changes, the character is being formed with at least

equally startling rapidity, when reason is often comparatively weak, and sentiment and emotion are always strong, a boy is taken away from the formative influences of the other sex, from the mother and sister, and thrust into a community composed of one sex only, where all do the same things, think the same thoughts, and talk round the same confined circle of subjects."

Nothing is here said about the effects upon the parents' character; and yet enough is said to be beyond answer.

Let us sum up, so far.

The worries of motherhood may be most effectively prevented, no doubt, by the renunciation of motherhood; but similarly life's little ills may be prevented by suicide, or the trouble of keeping one's nails clean by amputation of the arm. My comparisons will not seem extreme to any true mother who reads them.

Or the worries of motherhood may be prevented by the relegation of the mother's duties to successive hirelings at successive stages, and here a similar objection applies: the cost to the mother and the cost to her child are immeasurably too high.

There is, indeed, no absolute preventive that is worth its cost; only the mother who does not *care* does not worry — sometimes. But it is the assured fact of experience that the mother will reduce her occasion for worry to the minimum, who regards her function as a noble vocation, worthy of the utmost, both mentally and morally, of which she is capable. Such a mother will have many little

worries in her children's earlier years, for her ideals will be unattainably high — she would have her children perfect; but here as everywhere the stitch in time saves nine; you may bend the twig though you cannot incline the tree, and the mothers whose sons and daughters, as they reach the years of wilfulness and experiment and danger, cause them the worry that scars the heart and tells upon the very gait, or even drags down their grey hairs with sorrow into the grave, are only too often the mothers who spared themselves little worries when the growing plant was young and tractable. The question for the mother is this: Will you worry a little now, and *act,* or will you worry, even to despair, hereafter, when you cannot act though you would?

XIV

WORRY AND OLD AGE

JUST as worry in childhood, and worry in woman or domestic worry, show special characters and need special consideration, so worry in old age is distinct in certain respects, and forms a type of its own. Worry differs in its objects and its character at different ages, and in the two sexes, and, of course, in different individuals — in accordance with the psychological differences many of which are familiar to all of us. Every one knows, for instance, how largely youth lives in the future, and old age in the past. Hence, if we divide worry, according as to whether it looks before or looks after, into *anticipative worry* and *retrospective worry,* we may expect to find, and we do find, anticipative worry predominating in youth, whilst old age displays retrospective worry, and especially that variety of it which we call *regret.*

Babyhood worries not at all, for it cannot, worry being dependent upon self-consciousness, which babyhood does not possess. Childhood should never worry, and does so, as we have seen, only when its elders maltreat it, wilfully or otherwise. Youth is more self-conscious, and worries not a little; but it is resilient, elastic, enthusiastic; and

not merely has it only a brief past to survey with regrets, but regret is alien to the normal psychology of youth, whose mottoes are always "Excelsior," and "En avant." Regret in youth may be poignant for a brief space, but it is always evanescent in health. And youth sleeps well, takes little thought for the morrow, and has few responsibilities.

Adult life sees a further access of proneness to worry. The struggle for existence becomes keen, the might-have-beens cannot always be forgotten or dismissed, responsibilities multiply, the future is often uncertain. Worry, both retrospective and anticipative, has many opportunities — in men and in women alike. Yet adult life is, for most of us, a period of very fair health, and some consciousness of fitness. Further, one's time is usually well occupied; it does not hang heavy on one's hands; there are a thousand interests in this manifold world of ours, and the average man or woman is scarcely likely to become too self-centred or self-conscious.

Now old age, we know, should be green and hale and peaceful. "Life's fitful fever" is burning low, there is little need for hurry, the tide of opportunity may have been taken at the flood, or may have been allowed to pass unused; but, at any rate, it *has* passed. Years should bring the philosophic mind, an outlook calm, serious, not easily perturbed, an old age "serene and bright." Wise old Adam puts it well in "As You Like It," when he

says, "Therefore my age is as a lusty winter, Frosty but kindly." But I cannot do better than resort to Wordsworth for descriptions of old age as it should and may be, in man and in woman. For the first, I quote the last few lines of "The Happy Warrior": —

> "Who, not content that former worth stand fast
> Looks forward, persevering to the last,
> From well to better, daily self-surpast:
> Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
> For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
> Or he must fail, to sleep without his fame,
> And leave a dead unprofitable name —
> Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
> And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
> His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause:
> This is the happy Warrior, this is He
> That every Man in arms should wish to be."

And for the second, I quote the last stanza of "She was a phantom of delight": —

> "And now I see with eye serene
> The very pulse of the machine;
> A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
> A Traveller between life and death;
> The reason firm, the temperate will,
> Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
> A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
> To warn, to comfort, and command;
> And yet a Spirit still, and bright
> With something of angelic light."

Doubtless it is true and well that we can each of us point to examples of such old age; but it is also the lamentable truth that these examples are the exception and not the rule. Indeed, it is when

old age creeps on that worry finds its chance at last. I do not attribute the contrast between old age as we most commonly see it and old age as it should and might be, to any moral degeneration of the race, but rather to inevitable causes that are not in themselves to be regretted.

The fact is that the average type of humanity is undergoing a change in these days. Civilisation literally means city-fication, and the psychical type of the citizen is not the same as that of the rustic. To put the matter bluntly, the nearer a man is to the *vegetable,* the less will he worry. A vegetable marrow has no difficulty in preserving its mental repose, I fancy; and the man who is more or less a perambulating vegetable marrow is similarly favoured. Worry is the disease of the age, as I have called it, because it is a disease that specially affects the kind of men and women whom the age is producing. Like migraine, it is a "maladie des beaux esprits," and we are all becoming "beaux esprits" nowadays. Shakespeare's Adam was happily named, for he was a primitive type. He did not know the meaning of "nerves"; he was as little likely to suffer from the "jumps" as a vegetable marrow. His mental and nervous processes were very slow, and probably nothing in the world could hurry them. Like a baby, he lived mainly in the present. When old age came upon him, his vital speed, never anything but leisurely, merely became a little slower still. His simple wants were assured, and he, like the baby we dis-

cussed in another chapter, had no interest in a Stock and Share List. He did not stamp about his room, as some of us do, waiting for the late edition of the evening paper. It was an easy matter for him to preserve his mental peace; he had nothing to worry about, and scarcely had the mental apparatus for doing so, even if there had been occasion to use it.

But the ordinary old man, or elderly man, of to-day is of a very different type. Our civilisation is producing men — and even women, too, in these later years — who cannot content themselves with the ordinary vegetative processes of eating and sleeping and sitting in the sun that satisfied their ancestors. The woman who has led a busy life in the control and direction of her home and children finds herself destined to pass her declining years in the home of a married child, perhaps, where she has no duties of any kind to perform. The best thing that can happen to her is that she shall soon have grandchildren to think about and help to care for. There is a very definite and very much to be pitied class of the community for whom, only quite lately, and only amongst the most advanced nations, is any adequate mental occupation provided—the elderly women, whose children have taken wing, but whose activities, and especially their mental activities, are potentially unabated but have nothing to act upon. They have experience, patience, insight, and their invaluable feminity; but society does not yet choose to avail

itself of them. As the years advance, such women run a grave risk of becoming self-centred, losing their sense of proportion, and, since they have nothing worth while to concern themselves with, worrying about things that are not worth while.

More familiar is the case of the man of the same type, who, being no student of psychology, has thought to enjoy his latter years by giving up his business, or who has been superannuated by some automatic arrangement. Time now hangs heavy on his hands, creeps with leaden pace, and the active mind, since it has no external outlet, begins to prey upon itself. The psychical characters of the old age of such a man cannot conceivably be the same as those of the man who has never used his mind at any time — the rustic, the cowherd, the agricultural labourer.

Thus it is that the most familiar type of old age in our day is only too far from the ideal. Old age, as we are apt to meet it, has its own grievances; more than ever, we meet the *laudator temporis acti,* to whom each succeeding innovation is a new annoyance. Furthermore, a noteworthy disadvantage of the modification of mental type to which I have referred, is that the young and the active seem to have become — for reasons which we can now understand — less tolerant than ever of the foibles and frailties of age. We live at such high speed that the slow pace of age seems slower and more stupid than ever. We find it more difficult to sympathise, and our lack of sympathy necessarily

makes old age more burdensome than ever. The idea of the family is waning, family ties are weakened by modern ease of locomotion and modern speed; we have no particular sentiment for a patriarch as such; the faster we move the wider must become the gap between ourselves and those who, like the aged, have ceased to move; and if we were to be visited by bears, as were the children who mocked the bald-head in the Old Testament tale, few of us would escape the fatal hug. Even to the present writer, who is not exactly a veteran, it seems that reverence for age is less generally inculcated into children than it was when he was a child.

In short, old age is probably less tolerated and less tolerable to-day than ever in the past.

No wonder, then, that worry assumes a dire importance when age creeps on. In all times the old have been "out of it," and now they are more "out of it" than ever. We were all contented with a jog-trot formerly; now we must have the motor-car — and old age would jog-trot still.

It might be expected that, as death loomed nearer, religious worry would play a larger and larger part in the mental life of the aged. But this is entirely contrary to general experience. The youth who feared the "wrath to come" when it was relatively far away, is found to worry very little about it when it is presumably coming nearer. Old age is commonly merciful, and its religious outlook for itself sees less vengeance and more

compassion than it used. A distinguished American psychologist experimented with children of various ages, inquiring into the kind and measure of punishment which they allotted for various imaginary misdeeds. He found the youngest children vindictive, harsh, merciless; like the older — that is to say, the younger — penal legislation, which would hang a boy for stealing a sheep. The older children were more merciful, and the older more merciful still, like the modern school of penology — thus affording one more illustration of the parallelism between racial and individual development. Thus old age begins to realise, as youth cannot, that "*tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner,*" and it expects some such allowances for itself when Death comes, as it now makes for others. Hence it is, as I have said, that religious worry, often so potent a factor in the psychical life of the young, is commonly much alleviated in old age.

Now the worry of old age is not anticipative but retrospective; it is regret rather than apprehension. There is also the querulous fretfulness about present trifles that is so unfortunately familiar to most of us who have lived with old people. The worry of old age, then, is *regret* and *fretfulness.*

I used to know an old man who had played cricket regularly, and played it very well, until he was over sixty — when a serious and nearly fatal illness put an end to his cricket for ever. The sum-

mer was a miserable time for him. He could not keep away from a cricket match, and there he would sit, scornfully criticising the "form" of the youngsters, and telling, to inattentive ears, the tale of the sudden arrest of his own cricketing days. Ever his sad refrain was, "I was playing cricket two years ago." Alas! what word of comfort could be said?

> "Absence of occupation is not rest,
> The mind that 's vacant is a mind distrest,"

said Cowper. The lines are not exactly poetry, but they express a psychological truth, and it is especially applicable to old age.

When one talked, or rather, when one listened to that poor old cricketer that had been and never again would be, one was afflicted with a sense of impotence to help; and also, sometimes, when imagination was astir, with a sense of foreboding: "How shall I feel when I can play cricket no more?"

There is only one practical suggestion to make, and it is not new, but it is a good one. Elsewhere we have discussed the importance of hobbies in the preservation of the mental health. The curse of old age is precisely that "absence of occupation" of which Cowper wrote. He was a victim to melancholia himself, poor fellow, and spoke of what he knew. The moral is that the wise man, just as he lays a little money by, in provision for the *material* wants of old age, will also lay a little mental riches by, for the *mental* wants of old age. If you

live solely for cricket and billiards, like the old gentleman whom I have described, you will find your mind bankrupt when these are at last denied you; your old age will be a protracted and wearisome effort to occupy time without the means of doing so; trivialities will become important, memory a burden, life worthless to yourself and worthless to your companions.

As with the man who lives solely for sport, so with him who lives solely for business. His fate is *vitam perdere propter causas vivendi* — to lose all that makes life worth living on account of his efforts to obtain the means of living. He has had no time for reading, or gardening, or music, or poetry, or for the "flower of the mind" in any of its fragrant, lovely, and various forms. He has developed his psychical potentialities in one direction alone — and when superannuation comes, his soul is bankrupt. His bank account is doubtless opulent; he has accumulated in abundance the material conditions which may be used for happiness and mental ease, but he has stunted, and ultimately strangled beyond revival, the psychical powers which should now enable him to utilise those means. He has time and money to spend, but he cannot spend his money in such a way as to make his time well-spent. Therefore he will have resort to the obvious device of increasing his material comforts; he will try to purchase happiness and the joy of life by complicated dinners, rare wines, fine cigars, and the like. He has had

"no time" to cultivate the love of Nature, and so a walk in the country offers no attractions to him. Instead, he purchases a motor-car and tries to find joy in speed. Thus he neglects to take the necessary physical exercise, and as he is also over-eating and over-drinking, he beckons effectively, did he know it, to premature old age — senescence becomes senility before it need. His bodily health suffers, he becomes stout and gouty and scant of breath; his sleep is impaired. In short, he uses his money to provide him with the physical state that predisposes to worry. Everything loses its flavour; long ago he starved his palate for poetry and high-thinking and flowers and music; now even his food becomes insipid, though his *chef* cook never so cunningly, and multiply condiments to the last degree; high living is no substitute for high thinking, nor condiments for the power to enjoy the companionship of children.

My purpose in this book is not academic but practical; my desire is not to demonstrate anything, except in so far as the demonstration will effect something. If I were in medical practice as a psychologist — which I expect to be the new function of my profession in the coming days when physical disease is exterminated — and an old man were brought to me for my advice as to the means whereby to cure his fretfulness and irritability, and make his life worth living, I should endeavour, I suppose, to discover the least atro-

phied of his psychical potentialities — a not wholly wasted ear for music or interest in gardens — and should prescribe a serious attempt to develop it, even at the eleventh hour, so that he might find a new interest in life. But it is to the prevention rather than the cure of worry in old age that I would direct the reader's attention here.

Plainly, the moral of the preceding pages is that, if a man desires to avoid a burdensome, irritable, fretful old age, it behoves him duly to cultivate more than one, or even two, of the psychical possibilities that are within him. Men of a former type could content themselves with a vegetable ease in their declining years; but men of the nervous, mental type that is characteristic of our time require more than this. It is not only in Heaven that the wise man can lay up riches which neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and which are stored where thieves cannot break through and steal. There are few more pathetic sights than the old man or old woman, who cannot find means whereby to wile away even the few remaining years. If, however, we aim at what Herbert Spencer called " complete living," to prepare us for which, and for no less, he said, is the function that education has to discharge, we need not fear the empty old age which, in accordance with a psychological law only too familiar, is necessarily a fretful, irritable old age, ever occupied with futile regrets or equally futile worrying about the merest futilities. If we strive to develop the *whole* mind, then there will

always be something left, that will serve for interest and happiness, even to the last.

Beyond a doubt, the most beautiful attribute of old age is its sympathetic interest in youth, — the fashion in which the old man lives again in his children and grandchildren. This characteristic of old age at its best is the natural means whereby this period of life is made happy and interested, and worth living. Thus it is lonely old age that furnishes us with the saddest instances of fretfulness and what the Preacher meant by *vanity*. Very few, indeed, are the old men and women who do not find their lives worth clinging to in the companionship of affectionate grandchildren. The company of youth is of the very first value for age, and undoubtedly the company of age is of the utmost educative value for youth. The fundamental social institution, which is the family, should normally provide for these needs; pity 't is that our present civilisation so often displays a tendency to interfere with this great institution — the decadence of which has led to the destruction of so many previous civilisations. If old people are confined to the company of other old people, they hasten each other's downward course; there was a sound psychological truth symbolised in the old notion that the company of a young girl was the best means for the rejuvenescence of an old man. Probably never, however, was the tendency to abandon old age to its own devices so strong as it is to-day; and thus it is that the importance of

worry in relation to old age is particularly evident in our time. It seemed to Herbert Spencer, when he was studying the practical application of ethical principles, that the care of the aged by their young descendants formed the fitting complement and return, for the care which, in previous years, they had devoted to those descendants when they were very young indeed; and he regarded the imperfection of this return, witnessed in our times, as the most conspicuous direction in which our practical morals are in need of improvement. There is as yet little sign of that improvement; and I doubt whether the aged were ever so much to be pitied as they are to-day. I have tried to show how, in consequence of the change in temperamental type, the psychical needs of old age are greater now than they used to be; and it is this same change which, instanced in those members of the community who are not yet old, makes more difficult for them what has doubtless been difficult enough at all times — the tolerance of the whims and foibles of age, and the attempt to gratify them; as I have said, we live so rapidly that the contrast between the pace of youth and the leisurely canter of age is even more marked than it used to be. Observers tell us that the millions of sermons which are preached from Christian pulpits every year are undergoing a definite and, I doubt not, permanent change in the direction of a greater attention to questions of practical ethics rather than selfish questions concerned with the future of the hearer's own soul.

Now that the number of those who live to an old age is becoming so very much greater, in consequence of amplified physiological and medical knowledge, it is much to be desired that those whose business it is to act as the moral mentors of the people should pay a very special attention to this question of practical morals — a more due observance of which would tend, in the first place, to inculcate many old-fashioned virtues which are not too frequently illustrated in the young people of our time; and would tend, in the second place, to a very great amelioration of the lot of the aged.

XV

WORRY AND SEX

THERE are certain matters about which it is equally difficult to speak either in explicit or in veiled language; and yet they demand speech. The bodily functions which are concerned with the continuance of the race are important on every conceivable ground; and they cannot be ignored here. I must therefore write a chapter which I would gladly omit if the doing so were not the neglect of an opportunity. I shall be exceedingly brief, but my brevity is in no sense an index to the importance of the subject.

It is a commonplace amongst physicians that the functions to which I refer are the cause of an amount of youthful worry wholly out of proportion to any reasonable warrant that can be imagined for it. But the ways of worry, as we are continually observing, reck little of reason or unreason. They obey organic laws which lie deeper than the reason, are æons older than the reason, and admit no appeal to it.

But that is an exaggeration. In point of fact we find that if a sufficiently powerful appeal be made to the reason in many a case of worry, the

effort may be rewarded. If it were not so, there would be no possibility of use whatever in the writing of this chapter. I have only one point to make and I will quit further preamble.

Civilised communities are infested with a large variety of thieves and blackguards and brutes. Our recrimination of these is commonly confined to those who do their work in an open and simple fashion — the pickpocket, the burglar, the murderer. Public opinion would never permit a pickpocket openly to use the public prints for the purpose, let us say, of advertising a course of lessons in his nefarious art. But public opinion — that "chaos of prejudices," as Huxley called it — does permit a whole motley host of abominable characters to use the public prints for the pursuit of their disgusting end — the accumulation of money by means which are immeasurably more criminal, more injurious to the community as a whole, and more fatal to many individuals, than all the burglaries ever committed. I refer to the advertisements dealing with sexual matters which, to the indelible disgrace alike of the advertisers, the proprietors, and editors of the advertising publications, and the complaisant public, are to be found wherever one's eyes are turned. But my purpose is not the futile one, I fear, of expressing my opinion of these advertisements, but the more practical one of attempting, in so far as in me lies, to defeat their ends.

These advertisers are well aware of the peculiar

fact of human nature to which I have referred — the fact that there is a very marked relation between worry and the bodily functions that concern the future of the race. This is not the place in which to attempt an explanation of the fact that a man who will display no concern about any of a hundred really serious or even desperate diseases, will be reduced to an agony of apprehension about the most ridiculously trivial, or even wholly imaginary, disorder of these functions. Here we simply take it that the fact is so. Now this worry, whether warranted or unwarranted, is the prime source of the income of the vile advertisers of whom I speak. They have sufficient acuteness to observe this peculiar source of worry, and to recognise the importance of worry as a motor force in human action. Accordingly they set themselves, by every device that their filthy cunning can conceive, to write advertisements that shall foster, stimulate, and perpetuate this worry to the utmost; and they succeed most abundantly. Every physician has again and again been consulted by young men who tell how their study of these advertisements affected them, as the advertiser hoped.

The evil thus wrought cannot be fully expressed even by such terms as misery or agony. Fully to estimate it one would have to quote even the statistics of suicide. In the effort to battle against it, I will strike two blows; would that I had more power to my elbow.

The first is to state, for the consideration of all serious and decent persons, the proposition that *no advertisements dealing with sexual matters should appear in any public print of any kind.* Advertisements in general meet a public need; and that is their sufficient warrant. These advertisements meet *no such need:* they benefit absolutely no one whatever but the advertiser. No one who pays for the insertion of any such advertisement has any knowledge, or drug, or anything else of the smallest value to offer in exchange for the money of the misguided persons who reply to him. Nowhere throughout the Anglo-Saxon world is there a single young man who cannot find some honest and responsible medical man to advise him on these matters. I personally am proud to ally myself with the medical profession, though I do not practise; and some reader may say that it is easy to understand why I offer the doctor rather than the advertiser for these cases: I am taking the chance of doing a good turn to my own profession.

But such a reader will be utterly wrong. He will be as wrong as wrong can be in the motive he imputes to me — though that is a detail. The important thing is that he will be wrong in assuming that my advice, if followed, would lead to the aggrandisement of my professional brethren. On the contrary, all these patients come to the doctor at last; and, by the time they reach him, there may very well be something really the matter,

— something that it takes a long time and many visits and fees to cure. If we are to reckon in terms of mere money, the medical profession has few better friends than these blackguards of whom I speak.

I repeat, therefore, that no public or honest purpose is served by these advertisements concerning "Lost Vitality" and the like; and that no advertisements, openly or in indirect language, dealing with sexual matters should be permitted in any public print.

Lastly, let me attempt to outwit these advertisers by simply insisting upon the fact already stated. Their business is to produce as much worry as possible about these matters. They have the very great advantage that such worry is very easily produced. Let me, then, do what I can to convince every reader whom the matter concerns that nine-tenths or ninety-nine hundredths of all worry about such things is without the smallest warrant or justification. The notion that there is warrant is kept up by, and for the benefit of, those who make their living in consequence of it. If their lying mouths were stopped, and if those whose professional duty it is to have some acquaintance with these matters were consulted, the sum of worry concerned with matters of sex would immediately and properly be reduced to trivial proportions. Let the reader take my word as to this; and hereafter, when his eyes light upon the kind of advertisement that might otherwise have had a horrible fascination for

him, and might have produced in him that "sinking of the stomach" which the advertiser hoped to produce, let him do as I do. Let him merely murmur, "Liar, blackguard, and thief!" and be at ease.

XVI

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WORRY

THAT there is a profound difference between man and the lower animals every sane person recognises. But the doctrine of evolution and the great impetus it has given to the study of man's poor relations has lately caused us to discard as untrue many of the assertions that used to be made as to the nature of the cardinal distinction between man and all other creatures. Man can no longer be regarded as unique in that he can speak, nor in the fact that he stands erect, nor in the fact that he forms societies, nor in his possession of less or greater powers of reasoning. These and many other asserted means of distinction have had to be abandoned, and there are very many thinkers at the present day who are certain that, though there are differences of degree, there is no real distinction of kind between man and the lower animals that can be absolutely maintained. But however plausible their arguments may appear, and I am far from underrating their importance, no scientific considerations so called can blind us to the fact that there is a something, whatever its nature, which man possesses, and which the lower animals do not, and which, when discovered, must surely serve to

explain the evident and indisputable abyss which separates even the mediocre or inferior man from even the most intelligent of dogs or bees.

Now there are many thinkers, both scientific and anti-scientific, who declare that the cardinal mark by which man may be distinguished from all his inferiors is his possession of self-consciousness. Mere consciousness, marvellous and inexplicable though that may be, is no distinguishing mark of man. The great French philosopher Descartes did indeed maintain that the lower animals are mere automata, destitute of consciousness, and indeed to be ranked as no more than mere animated machines. But we can now guess that Descartes did not really believe in this proposition of his, and put it forward merely in order to protect himself and his books from the *odium theologicum*. Every fact which leads you to infer that your neighbour is conscious will lead you to the same inference in the case of your dog. Thus man is not distinguished in being conscious, nor yet in being rational. This we may freely grant, and yet recognise that man is profoundly distinguished in being self-conscious. I for one believe that it is this power which makes man man, and that to it are to be traced all those characters, and affections, and disorders, and disabilities of the human mind which play such a gigantic part in human life, and which it is my purpose to study in these pages. If, therefore, we are to treat our subject in philosophic fashion, — the only fashion that is

likely to lead us to the truth, — it is necessary that we make a very careful study of self-consciousness, attempting to ascertain what it really means, in what it really consists, and for what it counts in human life.

Self-consciousness is the recognition by each of us of the self that is in him — the formal and inflexible appreciation by his own mind of the fact that he is an individual or a *subject,* moving in a world which is not himself, but the object of his mind. We may trace the development of self-consciousness in the infant; indeed, I know no study more interesting than that of the slow development in a new human creature of that recognition of himself upon which his claim to rank as human really depends. Tennyson has well expressed the difference between the conscious but not self-conscious infant, and the more highly developed creature, now definitely to be ranked as human, who has attained to the recognition of his own individuality.[1] The poet tells us how at last the child, in the

[1] The baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that "this is I":

But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the use of "I" and "me,"
And finds "I am not what I see
And other than the things I touch."

So rounds he to a separate mind
From whence clear memory may begin,
As thro' the frame that binds him in
His isolation grows defined.

In Memoriam. Canto XLV.

course of his experience, is able to "learn himself," discovers his isolation and rounds to a separate mind in which clear memory may be possible. The dog, of course, has memory, but it is not the same as that which Tennyson means by clear memory, — the clear memory of the man who says, "That happened to me," or "I was there," in order to say which it is necessary first to have discovered the Ego or the *I*. But this possession of clear memory represents only one-half of the significance of self-consciousness. It is, perhaps, the very clearness of memory in man that enables him to discover himself, and this discovery thereafter gives new meaning and importance to memory, but it does much more. It enables man not only to look behind him, sometimes with indifference, sometimes with the joy of pleasing retrospection, sometimes with that distress which is one form of worry, sometimes with that commingled joy and sorrow expressed by the poet, who says that "a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things," and sometimes in that mood of chastened joy in which one recalls the "tender grace of a day that is dead," — but also to look forward, to project himself into the future, to fear and to hope. "We look before and after, and pine for what is not," says Shelley, and Pope has declared that "man never is but always to be blest." Both of these poets were hinting at what we call worry, and in doing so they had to lay stress upon this power of self-consciousness which enables man to transport him-

self from the Here and Now, in which alone the lower animals live, to the future and the past, the may-be and the might-have-been. Shakespeare has expressed the truth upon which I am insisting in that final way which needs no comment or amplification. Anatomists, biologists, psychologists, philologists, students of society and manners, and literary triflers, — these may all be counselled to seek no further for the *differentia,* as St. Thomas Aquinas would have said, that is the appanage of man. All that can be said and is to be said has been said once and for all by Shakespeare, in words which are the highest poetry because they are also the highest science, — the product not merely of the unlicensed poetic imagination, but of what Tyndall called "the scientific use of the imagination": Man is made *with such large discourse, looking before and after.*

The prime condition, then, of worry in all its forms is this self-consciousness which is the supreme characteristic of man. In popular speech, self-consciousness has a specialised meaning, and implies that undue recognition of consequences to self which only too frequently brings about the very consequences — such as failure to make a successful public appearance — which its subject seeks to avoid. Elsewhere we consider this human failing at due length, but here we must recognise that this is not the proper meaning of self-consciousness, which is none other than the recognition and consciousness of the identity of the

self, — a faculty which at least one philosopher, Thomas Henry Green, of Oxford, has regarded as the only reality in the universe, and as thus the creator, for each individual, of the universe he knows — of his external world; the self-conscious Ego is the creator of all its objects: "I am the centre" — and the maker — "of my own universe." This is but the idle tale of a metaphysician, but it will suffice to show us how fundamental and necessary is this character of the human mind. It is the prime condition of worry, which, without it, could not exist; and the first fact which we have to recognise is, therefore, the fact that, so long as man is to be man, it must always be possible for him to worry. If man is to be man, it is necessary that he be able to look before and after. The next thing for us to ascertain is evidently the *purpose* with which he exercises this supreme function.

This question can be easily answered. The fundamental character of every conscious thing, lower animal or man, is the *desire for life,* and this is ultimately identifiable with the *desire for happiness.* Of this character, it may or may not be possible to give some philosophical explanation, in terms of biology, perhaps, or in terms of one or another religious creed; but for our purposes it will suffice to accept it as a universal and indisputable fact. Happiness is "our being's end and aim"; and we differ from the un-self-conscious lower animals, in that we are able to anticipate the future, to identify ourselves as the subjects for happiness, and thus

to make it our conscious and recognised end and aim. If you are worrying about something that may happen next week, the truth of the matter is that you want to be happy next week, — it matters not whether your happiness is to be conditioned by your own state next week, or by the fact that you will be able to observe, and thus indirectly participate in, the happiness of those you love, — and you are worrying because of your fear that such happiness may not be attained. Similarly, if you fear that you may die next week, you are worrying because, conscious of yourself, you are apprehensive lest your self may fail of life and of the happiness which life may bring you. As long as man is man, it will always be possible for him to worry.

We have already reached a fact of the first importance, — that worry, or, at any rate, what we may agree to call *anticipative,* as distinguished from *retrospective,* worry, is conditioned by two fundamental characters of human nature, the faculty of self-consciousness, and the desire for life and happiness. And it will be well to convince ourselves that both of these characters are desirable and necessary. Of the first no more need be said: to abolish self-consciousness would be to destroy the dignity and the distinguishing mark of man, and is, in any case, impossible. "Man alone has the power to make himself ridiculous," and man alone can worry; but these are the "defects of his qualities." But that it is a similar necessity cannot be dogmatically asserted of the desire for life and

happiness. On the contrary, directly we come to consider the subject, we find that various philosophical and religious creeds have repudiated the desire for life, and have denounced the search for happiness; and incidentally we may discover, perhaps for the first time, the stupendous importance of worry in the life of our race, and the proportionate measure of attention which has been paid it by the makers of religions and systems of thought. Worry is no merely local phenomenon; it is no product of recent civilisation or of the increased ardour of the "struggle for existence"; on the contrary, it is common to all races and all times, and has been recognised as one of the great facts of human life in every age and place. I do not say that the need for a sober and thoughtful discussion of worry is not particularly urgent to-day, but I propose to show that it has ever been urgent; and this for the very reasons upon which I have endeavoured to insist, — that self-consciousness and the desire for life and happiness are invariable and universal facts of human nature in its natural state.

If, in the first place, we seek the evidence furnished by Christianity, we are readily rewarded. In the course of the Sermon on the Mount, the Founder of Christianity said, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." The assertion of the futility of worry and of the reason of that futility

is a leading principle of what may still claim to be the greatest of all religions — which has dominated the most important part of humanity for nearly two thousand years. This quotation tends, therefore, strongly to support my proposition that worry is an almost inevitable consequence of the facts of human nature, to be avoided only by the power of a living creed of some kind or other.

If now we turn our eyes still further to the East, and to the still more distant past, we find fresh evidence that worry is a fact coterminous with human life. The natural tendency to worry is fully recognised in Buddhism. The attempt of this creed to counteract the tendency is indeed more radical than that of Christianity. Buddhism goes to the very root of the matter by denying the validity of the desire for life. Whilst Christianity promises eternal life, free from all earthly cares, Buddhism declares that life itself is no boon, and promises eternal annihilation to those who follow its precepts. There is no more striking testimony to the universality and importance of worry than the Buddhist doctrine of Nirvana. The authorities disagree as to the exact meaning of this doctrine; some assert that it means annihilation, some that it means ultimate absorption of the individual in the universal; but no matter how many and how various readings of Nirvana we encounter, we are able to discern a common element in them all, and it is certainly this common element that is the very essence of the conception. Whatever else Nirvana does or does

not mean, it assuredly is a doctrine of *ultimate peace of mind.* Now a foretaste of Nirvana may be attained even here and now, if the adept will but recognise the futility of life, and will thus succeed in achieving the extinction of desire. Thus Buddhism, recognising the futility of worry, *and its all but inevitable occurrence,* if life be regarded as worth living, sought to choke the stream at the very fountain-head by denying this worth of life. It is indeed a pessimistic creed; if you are to live you must worry, and there is thus no remedy but to cease to live, or at least merely to live under protest, to endure life patiently, and welcome its end as your reward. Here Buddhism anticipates many subsequent forms of pessimism. The Stoics, for instance, taught a very similar doctrine, and the Cynics, with what Lewes calls their "ostentatious display of poverty,"[1] whilst neighbours were worrying in their haste to be rich. The Stoic doctrine was that "the pleasures and the pains of the body are to be despised; only the pleasures and pains of the intellect are worthy to occupy man. *By his passions he is made a slave.*" The passion for happiness and for life — this must be suppressed. Worry is a consequence of the most fundamental emotions or passions of man, and these must be conquered.

Many more illustrations might be cited, but I will content myself with two. In the Book of Ecclesiastes we find the same recognition of worry amongst

[1] Biographical History of Philosophy.

the Hebrews as amongst the Indians and the Greeks; whilst a poet of our own race and time has written of "the fret here . . . where but to think is to be full of sorrow and leaden-eyed despairs." [1] One and all, these teach us that life is inseparable from cares, that it is better "to cease upon the midnight with no pain," — "wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive"; or, at the very least, that we must extinguish that desire to live which is the root condition of all care, and worry, and fear, and apprehension whatsoever.

Thus it might be that we had already reached the goal of our present inquiry. Again and again there has been offered to men a solution of their difficulty. It amounts simply to this: care and worry are inseparable from self-consciousness and from the desire to live, which necessarily implies the fear that one may not live, or may not live as one might live; but this very emotional state which is generated by the desire for life deprives life of any value that it might otherwise have had. Life is thus not worth living, and may be made bearable only by the recognition of this fact. Recognising that worry is inseparable from the desire to live, you must extinguish this desire and so will find peace, having lost what was, indeed, not worth having.

But this is a cure for worry which, though effective for the purposes of those who employ it, cannot

[1] Keats' "Ode to a nightingale."

be accepted by us. We repudiate it because we deny the truth of the assumption upon which it rests. We believe that life is worth living, and therefore worth desiring. We cannot sacrifice th desire to live, even for release from the burden c care, which is seemingly inseparable from that desire.

Plainly, if life be not worth living, whether on account of its inherent defects or on account of the worry which is inseparable from it, we have reached the end of our argument. The cause of worry is life, and its cure is death. But if life be worth living, and we can satisfy ourselves of this truth, it is necessary to ask whether worry is really necessary, whether it develops by continuous evolution from a power of prevision which is essentially benign, and whether, by some internal discipline, or by a fresh orientation to the facts of life, we may avoid the evil thing.

Pleasures and pains, happiness and unhappiness, cannot be subjected to quantitative study, — that is to say, their intensity and force cannot be accurately measured, but we assume that some sort of measurement is possible when we say that life must be worth living if, on the average, it brings a surplus of happiness. That it does bring such a surplus only the very few and the very unfortunate will dispute. In the sense that we think life is worth living, we are nearly all optimists. But it is a highly important thing to ascertain the manner in which our opinion is formed, for, when we come

to analyse the varieties of optimism, we discover a very important fact which directly bears upon the genesis of worry. I have elsewhere argued that we may recognise three varieties of optimism — rational, emotional, and sensory or organic. By rational optimism I mean the deliberate acceptance of the view that life is worth living, following upon a sober, intellectual consideration of the facts of life, more especially from the biological standpoint. In this sense rational optimism is the creed of the great majority of thinking men; they hold that life is worth living — even this present mortal life — because we are so constructed that life brings us a surplus of pleasurable feeling. They base their optimism, not upon their individual sensations, not upon any creed instilled into their uncritical youth, but upon scientific observation alone. This is not the place in which to rehearse the scientific arguments in favour of the view that life is worth living. I would merely ask the reader to accept for our present purposes rational optimism as an article of scientific faith, and a necessary outcome of the theory of evolution. It is not the optimism of Pope who teaches that all partial evil is universal good, nor that of Socrates who avowed that to the good man no evil thing can happen, nor that of Browning who teaches that there shall never be one lost good, nor that of Leibnitz who asserted that this is the best of all possible worlds. Least of all is it the optimism which asserts that whatever is is right; but merely it asserts that, constructed as

we are, life brings us, on the average, a surplus of happiness, worry notwithstanding.

Emotional optimism I call that which depends upon the possession of some creed, such as that of Socrates, already quoted, or the belief in the conventional Heaven, or that of the Persian poet: "He 's a good fellow, and all will be well." The embodiment of some such creed in religion must be considered in our final chapter.

XVII

THE VARIETIES OF WORRY

HERE we must include an academic chapter in which we may attempt a formal classification of worry.

Perhaps the foremost distinction for us to recognise is that between normal and morbid worry; such a distinction must exist, difficult though it may be in many instances to define the exact limitations of the two classes.

It is plain that so long as man is self-conscious, and capable of prevision and desirous of life and happiness, he can scarcely banish from his mind the consideration of forthcoming events which are likely or certain to rob him of what he desires. Such worry must be regarded as normal, nor will it do offhand to say that such worry, though normal, is undesirable and useless. Directly we come to think of it, we see that it is impossible to draw any absolute distinction between the wise and necessary process of attempting to meet coming difficulties with no appreciable depression of mind, and the performance of the same process with consciousness of fear or worry. Again, it may be certain that though philosophic calm is often a very admirable possession, yet there are times when it may be a

curse, if not to self, then to others. "We have to take the world as we find it" has been the motto of the impotent and the forgotten of all ages, but it was a lie in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. It is writ large in universal history that discontent and doubt are the seeds of all moral and intellectual progress. Some may be disposed, hastily, I think, to deny that worry for the sake of self can ever be normal, or healthy, or reverend; but few who have considered the lives of the great reformers will dare to deny that worry for the sake of others may be not only normal and healthy, but adorable and potent — either the supreme agent or a symptom of the supreme agent in the amelioration of the world. Every prophet, Hebrew, Christian, Buddhist, or Agnostic, whose words have earned the right to remembrance, has been one who worried. As John Howard and Elizabeth Fry worried about our prisoners, Florence Nightingale about our soldiers, General Booth about the masses, so, in due reverence be it said, did the Founder of Christianity: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

To deny that worry may sometimes be not only normal but necessary and salutary, is to accept Stoicism, Quietism, the doctrine of *laisser faire*,

and the noble thought, " It will be all one a century hence." Unselfish worry has been one of the saving forces of history, one of the greatest friends of mankind. That is the meaning of the word " agonies " in the final couplet of the sonnet to Toussaint l'Ouverture, which we quoted in our first chapter.

Of course, our recognition of unselfish worry and the part it has played ought to interest us in the question of the personal consequences to the prophet or philanthropist. The last thing we desire is to cure his noble passion, but nevertheless we may ask whether there is not some fine philosophy capable of shielding him from personal ill, such as assuredly befalls those who worry for self alone.

Nature, we may hope, is on the side of him who worries for others, but she never fails to avenge herself upon him who worries for self. The self cannot cheat disease and death for ever, but the man whose desire is not for self but for the race is immune from personal defeat; his apparent failure may mean the ultimate triumph of his cause, as the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church.

If we are to be reasonable, we must agree to recognise the existence of a selfish worry which, whether useless or not, can scarcely be regarded as morbid, though it is in a vastly different category from the unselfish worry which we have just admired. Doubtless the greater part of all worry whatsoever is selfish worry which is somewhere on the border-line between the morbid and the normal. On the other hand, cases of morbid, unselfish worry

are very rare, occurring only as a species of religious mania or fanaticism, and impossible of occurrence amongst any people that had abandoned the morbid theological ideas which are fast sinking into permanent decay.

Again, there is the classification of worry according to time. It is the essence of worry that is not concerned with the present, but either with the future or the past. In our own generation, it is the looking before that is most frequently accompanied by worry, and this is evidently the only kind of worry that can possibly be of any use. The proper attitude to adopt towards past incidents that tend to induce worry is that of the admonition, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their dead."

There can be little doubt that the development of the psychical nature of man has led to a progressive change in the relative proportions of anticipative and retrospective worry. The act of imagination is involved in all worry; we either recall the past or we body forth the future. Of these two processes, the easier and older is undoubtedly that which involves merely the fundamental power of memory. But in these days we are learning more and more the depth of wisdom contained in the philosophy, — for it is a whole philosophy, — "Let byegones be byegones." True it is that the past is unalterable, but nothing can be more utterly false than to infer that the influence of the past upon the future is unalterable by the manner in which we contemplate it. We cannot alter the past, but we can and con-

stantly do control and determine the influence of the past upon the future. Except in the very old, it is usually its bearing upon the future that haunts us when we worry over the past. We say to ourselves, "If only I had done so and so, I should not now be about to endure such and such." There is too much good common sense in most of us to permit of retrospective worry simply for its own sour sake, and most healthy people possess the healthy conviction regarding past sorrows that "it makes no odds, and it shall not be permitted to make any odds"; in a word, we worry over the past not for itself but for its relation to the future; and the remedy for futile worry of this sort is the recognition of the fact that we ourselves have to be reckoned with in the chain of sequence.

Elsewhere we considered the different kinds of worry dependent upon its *locale* — the worry of worldliness and the worry of other-worldliness. Finally, we may note the distinction between material and spiritual worry — the worry about matter and the worry about mind. Elsewhere we see that a mark of the elevation of religion is the progressive decadence of worry about material things and the progressive insurgence of worry about spiritual things.

XVIII

THE PHYSICAL CURES OF WORRY

WORRY is so complicated a phenomenon, having so many varieties and causes, that the reader will not expect it to be curable by means of any single formula, or rule of life, or prescription. But the means of treatment, many though they are, may all be included under the two terms, physical and mental. Now, though worry is a disease of the mind, the physical or bodily aspects of its prevention and cure are not by any means to be ignored; so intimate is the relation of mind and body that the merely physical, "materialistic" measures which affect this mental disease are well worthy of a chapter to themselves, and here I propose to confine myself to them.

In a previous chapter we discussed at length some of the most important means by which health of mind may be maintained, and plainly the maintenance of mental health is equivalent to the prevention of worry. We analysed the idea of a "holiday," which should have some part even in every working-day; and we saw that holidaying is one of the chief preventives of worry. Other and still more potent means for the *prevention* of worry there are, but these are not physical, but

mental or spiritual. Hence we may now pass on to the *cure* of worry.

Certain physical means for the cure of worry have already been discussed — to be utterly condemned. These are drugs of various kinds, of which by far the most important is alcohol. I refer to them here merely in order that our discussion of the subject may be systematic. Our concern now is with physical cures of worry that do indeed cure, and amongst these such drugs have no place.

In so far as a man worries about anything whatsoever, he is a practical *pessimist.* It does not matter in the least what his ostensible creed may be. He may formally subscribe to the most optimistic of creeds, and yet be a practical pessimist. On the other hand, his creed may be the most hopeless materialism, and yet he may be a practical optimist. The question for us to consider, then, is the physical means by which we may make practical optimists, all questions of philosophic or religious creed being for the present ignored.

Thus our main business will be to consider the physical causes that make men into optimists rather than pessimists. The facts of alcohol prove abundantly that such physical causes do exist; and we have to ask whether there are any which, like alcohol, will convert a man into an optimist, to whom worry is merely a name, but which, unlike alcohol, will do so permanently and securely.

Now before we enter into the theory of the matter, which will be found of the first practical im-

portance, let us consider one of the most valuable and familiar means by which worry may be cured and prevented. The means to which I refer is *sleep,* and of course the first comment that springs to the reader's mind is that worry is destructive of sleep. It is of little avail to tell the victim of worry and consequent insomnia that sound, refreshing sleep will banish his cares. It is unfortunately true that we have here an instance of a vicious circle, and this fact makes it all-important that we should learn, if possible, how the circle may be broken. This is not the place, however, for a treatise on insomnia, and it is only possible to lay down a few salient propositions.

The man who realises that he has become or is becoming a victim of worry must be advised consciously and resolutely to direct himself to the question of his sleep. It is safe to say that the worrying man cannot sleep too much, and, as a rule, he sleeps too little. If he would be cured, then, he must attend to this matter. Insomnia may well be *the* efficient cause of worry in his case, and to remove the efficient cause is to cure the disease. If the doctor's help is necessary it must be obtained. There are very few cases of insomnia that cannot be relieved. This holds true even if we declare that hypnotic drugs are out of place in this connection. Thus used, they are all false friends, as we have already seen. It is worth recognising that the overwhelming proportion of cases of insomnia — including, of course, those which result in worry

— are due to simple and easily remediable causes. By far the most common of all the physical causes of insomnia is indigestion. This may be such as to cause scarcely any of the obvious symptoms of indigestion; but this is no reason for not making certain, in any case of insomnia, that indigestion is not its cause. If this cause be looked for, it will very often be found; and the mere lightening of the last meal of the day, the exclusion of coffee after it, or the use of some simple digestive drug for a short period, may suffice to relieve the sleeplessness, and thus the mental dispeace which it is causing. More vigorous measures may be necessary in some cases, but, as a rule, the doctor may be relied upon, if he is given a fair chance, to cure the sleeplessness and thus avert its consequences.

The qualifying clause is necessary, since it is only the few intelligent patients who do give the doctor a fair chance in such cases. The men whose profession it is to do the difficult work about which it is so easy to write, are still hampered by the fashion in which patients persistently regard their prescriptions as all-important and their advice as negligible. Nine times out of ten it is the doctor's advice — and this is peculiarly true of insomnia — that matters everything, whilst the prescription, as likely as not, is a mere *placebo* — something to please the patient, since patients of all classes closely resemble those who frequent dispensaries and the out-patient departments of hospitals, in that they display a pathetic belief in the

value of the contents of a "bottle," especially if those contents be highly coloured, and vigorously assail the senses of smell and taste. But it is not by the contents of such bottles that insomnia is usually cured; the rather is it by some modification of habits, such as the wise physician is wise because he is able to suggest — and fortunate if he is able to have his advice acted upon.

And now we must turn to the theory of the matter. Why should sleep relieve worry, and insomnia cause it? The answer is that the man who sleeps well is, *ipso facto,* a practical optimist, whilst the victim of insomnia is, *ipso facto,* a practical pessimist — a man who worries. And why does sleep, or the lack of it, produce such results in the sphere of the mind? The answer is to be found in the study of the conditions which are necessary to what I have elsewhere called *sensory, organic,* or, if you like, *gastric* optimism.[1]

Sensory or organic optimism I call that which is scarcely so much a state of mind as a state of the body. It is intimately dependent upon the health of the digestion, and is derived from the sensations transmitted by the nerves that run to the brain from the internal organs. These, in health, combine to give us what is called the "organic sense of well-being." In health, then, as I have said, "every man has an organic bias towards optimism"; and we must remember that the incalculable practical value of organic optim-

[1] See "Evolution the Master-key." (Harper & Bros., 1906).

ism is in itself an argument for rational optimism — the philosophic creed that life brings, on the average, a surplus of happiness, and is therefore worth living. But what I have called organic optimism leads us on to a closer analysis of the causes of worry than we have yet attempted.

Since we are all self-conscious we all look before and after; but nevertheless we do not all worry in the same degree, nor about similar things; whilst some of us, even without the aid of any particular creed, or even without the aid of smooth circumstances, scarcely worry at all. Wherein does the difference subsist?

Plainly, if it is not to be found in circumstances, it must be found in ourselves. We differ from one another, not merely in external configuration, nor in intellectual calibre, but also temperamentally and emotionally. Our mutual differences in this last respect are at least as great as the others. Two persons, alike self-conscious, alike called upon to face an imminent disaster, look upon it with different eyes. Men have long recognised this fact, and express it by the image — which is in defiance of medical experience, but serves the purpose nevertheless — that to the jaundiced eye everything is yellow, and by the converse image of "rose-tinted spectacles." It is the fact, then, that the organic conditions, the nervous organisation, that determine our outlook, differ widely in different men. This is one of the unappreciated commonplaces which superficial people dismiss as

platitudes. There has yet been no adequate study of the psychology of temperament from the scientific standpoint; and none other serves our purpose. Whilst it is true that in virtue of self-consciousness and the desire for life and happiness we are all predisposed to worry, it is also true that the emotional nature peculiar to each of us modifies this predisposition in an extraordinary degree, heightening it in some and lowering it in others, quite independently of external circumstances, the effect of which upon the mind must be rigorously distinguished from the consequences of the mind's own predisposition.

Now let us consider what we really mean by the inherent predisposition of the mind itself. According to some unscientific systems of thought, such an assertion is incapable of any further analysis. The mind, according to them, is an indivisible, unanalysable substance, its characters depending upon nought but the Divine will. The number of people who retain this wholly uncritical notion, however, is fast diminishing; and certainly we have no place for it here. On the contrary, we have to recognise an absolute and complete, if not a necessary connection between mind and body; whilst, for practical purposes and without attempting any deeper inquiry, we must regard the mind and its characters as conditioned by the state of the body. Practically we shall have to recognise the action of the mind upon the body, and the action of the body upon the mind; but this last phrase is inadequate

fully to express the truth it suggests. Mental states and bodily states are not identical, but yet they are inseparable; and our descriptions of them are diverse but complementary ways of expressing the same fact. When, therefore, we assert the existence of profound emotional or temperamental differences between men, determining in very large measure the manner in which they look before and after — in which they contemplate the facts of the past and the possibilities of the future — we must go on to ask ourselves what are the bodily facts by which these emotional differences are conditioned. "The mind is as deep as the viscera" (the internal organs), said Herbert Spencer in the last chapter of his priceless autobiography; and we shall soon see the practical significance of that saying.

It means that, whilst we are all predisposed to worry, the measure of that predisposition is capable of almost indefinite modification by our physical health. As that statement stands, it is not adequate nor even correct. The question is not merely one of health.

This is evident when we consider the facts of two common and terrible diseases — tuberculosis of the lungs and general paralysis of the insane. In the first of these — often known as consumption or phthisis — the patient's tendency to look on the bright side of things, to expect speedy recovery, and to leave all worrying to his friends, is so conspicuous as to have led, long ago, to the coining of the term *spes phthisica* — the phthisical hope —

in order to indicate its characteristic association with a disease which, until quite lately, was well-nigh hopeless. Whether or not this state of mind be explained by the common occurrence of slight fever in this disease, at any rate it is a striking instance of the manner in which physical disease may affect the mental outlook.

But the case of general paralysis, or "paresis," is yet more striking. Here is a disease which, so far as we have any record, is invariably fatal, death commonly occurring within about two years of the first symptoms. The patient rapidly and visibly fails in every way, physical and mental. In the later stages, he lies in a huddled heap, unable to perform the simplest functions, his skin broken by the mere pressure of his clothes, no external circumstances that can make for happiness present, and none that can make for misery wanting. Yet, throughout, the patient is happier than any king. He cannot worry about anything whatever; his peace of mind is alike non-conditioned by, and immune to, all exterior circumstances. In the light of these and similar facts, we certainly cannot say that the measure of a man's predisposition to worry is in direct proportion to his departure from the standard of bodily health. Never was philosopher yet that could endure the toothache patiently; yet the general paralytic "suffering" — if that is the word — from a disease which is incalculably worse than toothache, is more consistently and imperturbably happy than he ever was in his days of health.

As I see them, these facts are extremely instructive. They do much more than teach us that peace of mind is not necessarily correlated with health, nor worry with disease. They teach us that there may be a pathological, a morbid peace of mind. Plainly the mental ease of the patient who is all but moribund from general paralysis is morbid. But more. What of the mental peace seen in the man, suffering from early symptoms of insanity, whose affairs are in a desperate state, yet who evinces no concern thereat? His peace of mind is evidently morbid; *he ought to be worried.*

I think we have discovered an important — if, indeed, an evident — truth: that not all worry is morbid. If there are times when not to worry is to raise doubts of one's sanity, it is plain that there are circumstances in which a judicious worry is natural, normal, and right. We must distinguish, then, and not permit ourselves too roundly to declare that worry is a disease of the mind, since it may be answered that there are times when not to worry indicates disease of the mind. Hereafter, then, we must invariably distinguish, whenever the distinction is as significant as it certainly is true, between *normal and morbid worry.*

I have quoted the two remarkable instances of tuberculosis and general paralysis, partly because they teach us that worry may be normal or morbid, and its absence also, but chiefly because one has to recognise facts, and because it would not do

roundly to state that freedom from worry is proportionate to the bodily health, when such striking exceptions are to be found. Nevertheless, when we allow their full value to such exceptions as these, there does remain a rule which is generally true, and which is of the utmost importance in any understanding of worry. It is the rule that, in the vast majority of all cases, morbid worry and a morbid state of body go together, whilst peace of mind is associated with bodily health. These propositions are so widely true, and so important, that it is to be hoped that the reader will not attach more than due importance to the exceptions which I have felt bound to quote. But this indeed is scarcely likely, for, after all, the main fact is a commonplace of experience.

But it is well not only to recognise the fact, but also to have a rational understanding of it. And this will be easy if we remember what has already been said of organic optimism. It was pointed out that the organic sense of well-being, to which we refer when we speak of "feeling fit," and which explains the optimism, the peace of mind, and the freedom from morbid worry which are begot of good health and of good digestion, depends upon the combination in consciousness of the faint sensations which reach us through the thousands of nerve fibres that are distributed to the internal organs of the body. Now, in health, the impressions which these fibres convey to consciousness are exceedingly faint. Indeed, as a rule they are rather

negative than positive. It is only the convalescent, in whom the organic sense of well-being is returning, that is able fully to appreciate it as a positive fact, rather than merely the absence or negation of discomfort. But though the sensitiveness of these nerves is comparatively so slight, they are able exquisitely to respond to every kind of disorder that may affect the organs to which they are distributed. It would be a great mistake to imagine that this disorder must consist of some grave disease before it is able to affect these nerves. The very slightest poisoning of the tissues — such, for instance, as that consequent upon spending an hour or two in a badly ventilated room — is more than sufficient in many people to abolish the organic sense of well-being, and to produce that state of consciousness, misunderstood by itself, which leads a man to worry about external things, *whereas the real cause of his worry is within him.*

Now, if we once recognise that even the very smallest departure from health may suffice only too easily, in virtue of its effect upon the internal nerves, to produce the state of consciousness that leads to worry, we shall be ready to understand the prevalence of the symptom that we are studying. If the smallest degree of ill-health, however temporary or trifling, is sufficient to induce a morbid and unjustified worry, then we can understand why worry is so widespread; for minor degrees of ill-health, in the present state of civilisation, are not far short of universal. If there is any one fact in-

sistence upon which would justify this chapter, it is this fact that only a very small percentage of the population of any city can be regarded as well. The main condition predisposing to morbid worry is a minor degree of physical ill-health, and such ill-health is the rule rather than the exception to-day. It is probably safe to assert that of the predisposing causes of morbid worry, none can be named for importance beside the minor degrees of ill-health, and especially of indigestion, which affect such a large proportion of the citizens of any modern community. Eminent amongst the physical cures of worry, then, will be attention to minor degrees of ill-health in every case of worry where this state of affairs can be recognised. Chief importance attaches to disorder of any part of the digestive tract, since there is to be found the distribution of those nerves upon the proper behaviour of which the organic sense of well-being depends. This is why I use the phrase *gastric optimism,* in order to indicate the importance of the stomach — the mere plebeian stomach — in determining the emotional tone of its owner's mind, and deciding whether he shall be a practical optimist or a practical pessimist.

It follows, for instance, that a man may worry because he upsets or overloads his digestive organs by eating too much. Now it has lately been proved, by the researches of Professor Chittenden, in America, that those doctors were right who maintained that the great majority of well-to-do persons

eat too much; and here we have an explanation of much meaningless and unnecessary worry.

Again, these facts explain the general relations of optimism — practical optimism — with good digestion, and of pessimism, such as is evidenced in much of the writings of Carlyle, with dyspepsia. They also afford a testimony to what is in no need of further testimony, the supremacy of the reason over all its enemies in the case of such thinkers as Spencer and Darwin. Both of those men were victims to chronic dyspepsia, and yet they were optimists. But theirs was a rational optimism, the reason defying those internal sensations which, in ordinary men, would have inevitably led to pessimism.

Again, these facts explain the inconsistency to be found in the writings of many authors who were artists rather than thinkers, in whom the reason was not supreme, and who had the artistic temperament, which is ever at the mercy of organic sensations, leading to optimistic writing when the digestion is in order, or when alcohol has modified the organic sensations, and to an equally decided pessimism in writings produced when the digestion is out of order, or during the period of depression that follows the transient stimulation of alcohol.

The foremost physical cures of worry, then, are, in the first place, such measures — varying, of course, according to circumstances — as procure abundant and normal sleep; and, in the second

place, such measures — similarly various — as procure easy, rapid, and complete performance of the functions of the digestive tract — the influence of which is always dominant in determining the presence or absence of that sense of organic well-being which is the one physical condition that excludes the possibility of morbid worry.

This last statement has already been justified. The case of two common and terrible diseases has proved that even the gravest ill-health cannot produce worry if the conditions are such as to favour — in some inexplicable way — the organic sense of well-being; and, on the other hand, we have only to consider the countless people, in times past and in the present, who have believed and believe that an enormous proportion of their predecessors are suffering eternal torment, but who nevertheless are happy, because the possession of a good digestion and the enjoyment of sound sleep make worry impossible, even in the presence of such an appalling cause for worry.

Appalling I might well call it, even if I had seen only one case of religious melancholia in my life. For it is only necessary that some physical cause shall interfere with the sense of organic well-being, as it does in such cases, for the miserable patients to pass days and nights of mental agony in contemplation, sometimes of the fate which they think to be in store for themselves, sometimes of the fate which they fear that others have earned.

When such a patient is cured, and the organic sense of well-being returns, the belief, as a belief, persists — but it no longer causes any worry, either for self or others.

Such is the empire of the body over the mind.

XIX

PRACTICAL MATERIALISM

THERE exists a stupid confusion, which we must here avoid from the first, between practical and philosophic materialism. The latter term is applied to the doctrine that matter is the only reality, mind being merely a transient phenomenon produced by it. As most people know, this doctrine is essentially childish, being the philosophy of children and of adult persons who have never made the slightest inquiry into the nature of knowledge, whilst the latest discoveries in physical science have added to it the last touch of absurdity. But a man who does not interest himself with such matters may passively accept the doctrine of philosophic materialism, even though the interests of his life are wholly spiritual, whilst the follower of Berkeley or Hegel, who holds matter to be an illusion, may yet be a practical materialist.

Practical materialism is a constantly besetting sin of man. We are all tarred with the same brush, readers and writer alike, but beyond a doubt it is a specially besetting sin of our own age and of great cities. For the majority of us the most absorbing interests of life are more or less material, and the true criterion of success is one's banker's

pass-book. We do not at present live in one of those periods, such as have certainly been, when men — probably very similar to ourselves so far as inherent characters were concerned — found their chief interests in intellectual disputation, in the production of works of art, or in other non-material ends. Even in Japan, where, until a recent date, the craftsman was inspired chiefly by the love of beauty and scarcely at all by any consideration of the monetary value of his product, we find that the æsthetic is yielding to the financial consideration. On the other hand, the material activities of the age are by no means to be deplored in the short-sighted fashion exhibited by Ruskin in his denunciation of railways. It is necessary for us to pass through a period of machinery and grime, diminution of cost of production of material things, and the simultaneous acceleration of the process. With the continuous application of human ingenuity to these material ends, — which, be it remembered, certainly serve the physical life, and therein the necessary condition for the spiritual life, — and with a continuance of that diminution in the birth-rate which is characteristic of all highly developed communities, there must necessarily come a time when the physical conditions of life are such that their production and maintenance need not, as at present they do, occupy the whole, or very nearly the whole, of the time and energy of all but the very few; and posterity will enter into the fruit of our labours.

Meanwhile we have our own lives to live, and we are not called upon to sacrifice ourselves for future generations. The man who entirely renounces material ends and produces a noble "tone-poem" or a fine picture is as truly serving posterity as he who cheapens the cost of the production of steel. But the question for us, who are incapable of creative art, or even of adding to the heritage of imperishable thought which our ancestors have bequeathed to us, is this: How in this material age may we order our lives so that, whilst on the one hand, by our labours, we justify our place in society, on the other hand we make our lives of the utmost value to ourselves?

Every practical materialist is a maker of worry. It is a fact of nervous physiology that all physical pleasures pall, and that none can confer permanent contentment. It is a further fact that, once the pursuit of material ends be entered upon, the goal is found to recede as we approach it. It is true that with spiritual ends the goal or the ideal is ever unattainable, but the saying "it is the pursuit that we pursue" is infinitely more true of spiritual than material ends. The pursuit of mental enrichment, though certainly not finite, is an end and a joy in itself. The pursuit of material enrichment can never satisfy and constantly disappoints us. Shelley was assuredly right when he spoke of "that content surpassing wealth, the sage in meditation found."

Practical materialism with all its lamentable

consequences, involving not merely atrophy of the spiritual life but also the production of envy, malice, hatred, and all uncharitableness, is a tendency to which most men need no urging. This fact makes it particularly unfortunate that certain great ethical teachers in recent times have urgently insisted upon certain doctrines of practical morality which directly inculcate practical materialism, and therefore defeat the only end of morality — which is the ennoblement and enrichment of life. We may recognise the half-truth of these teachings and thank the writers for their aim, whilst wholly repudiating the application of their doctrines in practice.

These moral doctrines may all be summed up in one very simple proposition, *Life is for work.* No sooner is this said than we recognise that for not a few amongst us it is entitled to be called a "Gospel of work." There are many amongst us, men and women, young and old, who find life dull and purposeless, who are fretful when they are not bored and bored when they are not fretful, and to whom life would assume a new aspect if only there were set before them some work in which they could take an interest. In such cases it is beyond dispute that the cure for worry is work. The same applies, as every one knows, to the grief aroused by bereavement. The sorrower plunges into some active occupation which does not leave him a moment to think and insures the sound sleep that follows from physical fatigue,

and for him it is certainly a gospel that life is for work.

But it is when we come to erect this proposition into a universal truth that we see its inadequacy. Its great preacher was Thomas Carlyle. Curiously enough this bitter opponent of utilitarianism was also a bitter opponent of art. He had no words too strong to express his scorn of those who believed in art as an end. "Life is for work," he said. And the counsel is constantly repeated to young men and women in our day, without discrimination between those for whom, as we have seen, it is really a gospel, and the vastly larger number who find in it merely another encouragement to the worship of Mammon.

For the question arises, If life be for work, for what is work? The greater part of human work at the present day conforms to the type best illustrated by the addition of a column of figures. This in itself affords no spiritual nourishment; it does not bring happiness; it is not an end in itself. It is only a means to a further end — the proper conduct of a business which is justified, why? — because it serves human life. No one for a moment will question the proposition that work is for life. But no one can admit its truth whilst continuing to hold, without the most serious qualifications, the proposition that life is for work. If life really be for work, as is so very commonly taught by those who regard heaven as the ultimate reward for that work, what is the meaning and

purpose of the life hereafter where there is to be no work (because there is no need for it)?

In short, the ethical basis of practical materialism is fundamentally false. Life is not for work but work for life; and life is for happiness. In the first place, then, experience proves that practical materialism does not achieve its end, and in the second place, the ethical basis for that doctrine is found to crack under the logical hammer.

But there is a profound truth embedded, though distorted, in this ethical doctrine. It is the truth that without activity — a more accurate word than work in this connection — life cannot obtain happiness. Whether or not the activity brings in money — that is to say, whether or not it is work in the ordinary sense — is a totally irrelevant question. The poet who spends an afternoon in polishing a stanza, which may never be printed and will certainly never be paid for, is finding his happiness in activity, and it is a higher happiness than he would have obtained by exchanging for a cheque verses which, as a poet, he knew to be not poetry. Apart from death and disease and sins against love, it is surely the chief defect of human life at the present day, — it is not a defect which has always been, nor yet one which will always be — that only the happy few find in their work both a means and an end. At the present time this ideal is attained only by the thinker, the artist, and the inventor, in all their various forms. These have, in full degree, the pleasure of creation, which

is, of course, the pleasure of self-expression; psychologically it is identical, no matter whether the product be a novelty in orchestration or an improvement in the internal combustion engine. In both cases the accomplishment is a pleasure in itself, as well as a fair exchange for material benefits. The work is both a means and an end. But for the vast majority of men the work itself conforms to the type already illustrated. To have added up a column of figures correctly affords scarcely more satisfaction than is involved in the thought that it will not have to be done again. There is something terrible in the contemplation of the fact that, of the total conscious hours of the vast majority of men, the greater proportion is entirely devoted to activities which are put forth only because this price must be paid in order that the few remaining hours per week may really be *lived*.

Thus I look forward, as I have said elsewhere, to a future type of society which will differ from our own almost as light differs from darkness. To-day we abuse the prosperous classes for practical materialism. Do we realise that practical materialism is the necessary and inevitable philosophy of the unprosperous many? They cannot even worship the goddess of getting on. Their urgent business from day to day is to keep body and soul together, and all the time they are necessarily losing life in the continued effort to obtain the means for life. But I look forward to a type of society which, in contrast to the past military

type and the present military-industrial[1] and industrial types,[2] I will venture to call the *spiritual* type in which, to use the words of Spencer, men "will use the products of industry neither for maintaining a militant organisation nor exclusively for material aggrandisement, but will devote them to the carrying on of higher activities." Indeed, we may look even a little further to a time when the products of industry will require for their production only a quite insignificant proportion of the whole sum of human activities. As I have said, "In the spiritual type of society, where material wants are easily satisfied, men will be justified in devoting large portions of their time to those activities with which most of us are now justified in filling only the leisure part of life. International competition will remain to show itself in a noble patriotism, which rejoices — to use the illustration suggested by Carlyle — more in our Shakespeare than our India. . . . To the industrialism of the present — which is at present a legitimate means to the legitimate end of the fulness of life — there will succeed, in the spiritual type of society, a nobler industry concerned with the accumulation of riches which neither moth nor rust can corrupt, stored in the mansions of the mind, where thieves cannot break through nor steal."

But let me remind the reader, ere we leave this subject, why I quote these speculations here. It is because of the immeasurable difference between

[1] Great Britain, Germany. [2] Switzerland.

the relations which these two kinds of activities display to worry. Practical materialism not merely makes for worry but sometimes it actually goes so far as to deify worry. This lamentable end can be attained by slow degrees through stages which, if they went no further, would be perfectly defensible. A young man is told that he must take his work more seriously; he does not care enough. If he never worries about his work he will never do any good work. How can he expect to get on if he is more interested in poetry than in ledgers; and, of course, how can he expect to be happy if he does not get on? Indeed, the prophets of practical materialism sometimes seem to take a hint from the theologians of a passing day in endeavouring to inculcate a kind of feeling about the duty of "caring," almost if not quite analogous to the feeling of the "sinfulness of sin."

On the other hand, the man who finds his chief pleasures in non-material ends has an incalculable advantage in respect of worry. No better illustration of the difference can be found than in the relatively trivial sphere of sport, where it fully obtains. The occupations of life in an ideal world should one and all be like the game which one plays for the sake of the game. I sit down to play chess with a friend, or I stand up to my old friend and enemy at the wickets, and I mean to have the best of it. If I do, well and good; if not, perhaps it was his turn, and it may be mine again next time. In any case, the game was worth playing. I play

to win, but if I am beaten I am not sorry that I played at all. But suppose that I make my living by playing chess, and that the adequacy of my income depends upon my winning prizes of a certain value at certain tournaments. Obviously the whole aspect of the game is transformed. Now I can no longer afford to lose; now I would as soon take the prize, if I could, without playing for it. I am no longer playing "a friendly"; one cannot afford to be friendly when the struggle for existence is in process.

But in the ideal world, which is by no means impossible of realisation, all our games and all our work will be "friendlies." There will always remain glory to fight for, and there will always be those who worry at failing to obtain glory; but this is not the worry that kills or scars except in the case of very few. I need not illustrate my meaning further, for all my readers are familiar with the poem in which Mr. Rudyard Kipling has expressed this idea.

In our last chapter we shall see reason to believe that practical materialism is essentially irreligious, for it involves a denial of the doctrine that the good is imperishable.

XX

RELIGIOUS WORRY

THE relations of worry and religion in general are manifold and remarkable. If we survey the whole field of religion so far as is possible, including not only the great modern religions in their many forms but primitive religions, and including the true and the false in each, we find that there are three distinct relations for us to consider. The first is that in certain of its forms — forms which, in these days, men are coming to regard as false and morbid — religion is and has been *a cause of worry*. The importance of this subject is daily diminishing, as I shall hope to show. Secondly, we find that a great proportion of the beliefs and practices of men, coming under the general head of religion, may be regarded as *consequences of worry*. It may fairly be said, I think, that most religions show signs of having been produced in order to relieve and avert worry. I am using the word in its large sense to include fretting, fear of the future, fear of great natural phenomena, such as thunder and earthquakes, and fear of death. With these may also be included many other forms of dis-ease[1] of mind which are closely allied to

[1] Disease, of course, is properly dis-ease.

worry and which certain kinds of religion in all ages have sought to alleviate. Thirdly, it is certain beyond certainty that true religion is a *cure of worry,* a preventive of worry, and utterly incomparable in its power of performing these functions.

To attempt to compass this great field in a single chapter would be most foolishly to underestimate its importance and its extent. I purpose here merely to deal with the first of the three relations which I have indicated. My subject, therefore, is Religious Worry.

It is necessary for each man to speak what he believes, trusting surely that truth is great and will prevail.[1] That I yield to none in my reverence for true religion is already known to my readers; but this reverence is accompanied, as it is in all who share it, by an utter abomination of the falsities which have injured religion so abundantly in time past — though their day of reckoning is now at

[1] Says Herbert Spencer in one of his noblest passages: — "Whoever hesitates to utter that which he thinks the highest truth, lest it should be too much in advance of the time, may reassure himself by looking at his acts from an impersonal point of view. . . . It is not for nothing that he has in him these sympathies with some principles and repugnance to others. He with all his capacities and aspirations and beliefs is not an accident but a product of the time. While he is a descendant of the past, he is a parent of the future and his thoughts are as children born to him, which he may not carelessly let die. . . . Not as adventitious therefore will the wise man regard the faith which is in him. The highest truth he sees he will fearlessly utter: knowing that let what come of it he is thus playing his right part in the world." I quote these words not in the vain belief that what I have to say is worthy of them, but because they consummately express one of the necessary principles of all progress.

hand. I write these words in the belief that they will protect me from the untrue charge of hostility to that which I revere, and the supreme value of which I shall endeavour to indicate before our study has come to an end.

The varieties of religious worry may thus perhaps be summarised: worry as a product of the religious conscience; worry about past sin, about present sinfulness, and about "the sinfulness of sin"; the fear of hell — which in these days more commonly takes the form of a vague apprehension of future retribution; fear of the evil one; and the fear of death. Whether for well or for ill it is certain that each of these forms of religious worry now plays an almost incredibly less part in human life than was formerly the case. This is not merely the opinion of one who welcomes the fact, but is published and bewailed by many leading ecclesiastics of a certain type at the present time. There is no question, either, as to the historical evidence. The first instance that springs to mind is, of course, Buckle's famous and appalling chapter upon the sermons preached in Scotland during the seventeenth century. There yet remains a work to be written by some philosophic and erudite historian concerning religious worry, its origin and history, its power in individual life, and as a factor in human history. Here, however, we can attempt merely to consider religious worry as a fact of our own times.

The past being unalterable, it is evident that *retrospective worry* is absolutely futile; it is more than evident, indeed, — consciously or subconsciously it is realised by all of us, and one is almost inclined to doubt whether there ever was or is any retrospective worrying not really dependent upon *anticipation* of the future. If it be absolutely certain that a past event, however distressing or however unworthy, is utterly impotent to affect the future, either in this life or in any other, no one, I believe (save possibly in certain cases of insanity), will worry about it. Hence I take it that retrospective worry must always depend — as it certainly does in the actual victim of the disease known as religious mania — upon the belief that that which is worried about may or must work to the future detriment of the individual. Almost all retrospective worry depends upon the possibility of future punishment, of future untoward consequence. I will not utter such a libel as to say that a murderer cannot be conceived to worry over his deed even though he is absolutely certain that it will never be revealed in a human or divine assize. The last cry of his victim might well haunt such a man though no punishment were to be feared. But, in general, retrospective worry, I maintain, does depend upon the fear of future consequence.

This has ever been a potent weapon of the unworthy ecclesiastics of all churches and religions.

I believe that the normal tendency of a healthy man or woman, unmodified by dogmas, in the consciousness of past wrong-doing, is a tendency *to forget*, to "let byegones be byegones." I believe not only the healthy but the natural attitude to be: "It cannot now be undone, no purpose can be served in thinking about it, I must try harder to live more nobly in the future." I do not say that these propositions are always formulated, but they represent the subconscious attitude of the natural healthy man.

Never yet was the priest, however, of any ecclesiastical system, ancient or modern, who could afford to permit wrong-doing such oblivion. On the contrary, it has ever been the priest's business to insist and to expatiate upon past wrong-doing, to preach its awful though yet unrealised consequences, to teach that the heart of man is desperately wicked in its tendency to forget, and that *something must be done.* There is no more fatal error, says the priest, than to imagine that past wrong-doing can ever safely be forgotten; on the contrary, there is an approaching time when the secrets of all hearts shall be opened. You would like to forget and make a fresh start; but you must not forget. If you do you will only earn a terrible reminder. Your only chance lies in the full realisation of the depth of your wickedness and the immediate adoption — "to-morrow may be too late" — of measures of sacrifice or penitence or payment of some kind. "Know thou that

for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." [1]

Now certainly no student of science is prepared to deny the truth of the doctrine of eternal consequence. But also there is no student of science who does not believe that there exists a necessary *proportion* between consequence and cause. Thus, though we are bound to admit that in a very true sense the past is never dead, since it was the parent of the present and the future was in its womb, we are by no means prepared to admit, indeed we totally deny, that the chain of events is constituted as *some* officials of all religions, ancient and modern, would have us believe. In these present days, when scientific ideas are beginning to dominate men's thoughts, it is highly necessary for the upholders of the old order to show, if possible, that their doctrines are in entire consonance with scientific teaching. Thus we are assured that the theological doctrine of retribution is proved and demonstrated by the scientific doctrine of consequence. On the contrary, I am prepared to assert that the theological doctrine constitutes a denial of the scientific doctrine. We students of science believe in the unending power of the past, but exactly because we believe in the continuity of nature, we believe that its consequences will be demonstrated *in the natural order*. But observe

[1] Ecclesiastes, Chap. xi : 9. This is quoted from the Old Testament, be it remembered, not from the New Testament, with its message of forgiveness and peace and consolation.

what is the real gist of the theological doctrine. It is a denial of natural consequence. Natural consequence asserts that the past wrong-doing is potent in proportion to the part it played in the natural course of events. The natural man has an unformulated belief in the continuity of nature in certain cases, at any rate. If the wrong was a slight one, — if, for instance, it was no more than a wrong thought or a wrong but unrealised intention, — the natural man is inclined to the opinion that it is not worth worrying about; its potency in the natural order is so insignificant. So far as any scientific doctrine is concerned, the natural man is right. If now the ecclesiastic steps in with the assertion that unless forgiveness is earned for that wrong thought, whether by sacrifice or penitence or confession or money down,[1] the most disastrous consequences will ensue, he is at liberty to prove his case if he can, but he is certainly not at liberty to invoke the aid of science. Science believes in eternal *natural* consequence, and that belief involves a denial of the doctrine of *unnatural* consequence. Science, for instance, cannot comprehend the doctrine of those theologians — now, happily, almost extinct — who used to assert that it is possible to gain a spiritual paradise by a death-bed repentance after years of villainy. It seems to science that villainy brings its own necessary consequences in moral if not physical degradation,

[1] Money down is at the root of all this evil in the case of many savage and primitive religions.

and that these consequences are as inevitable as are any other evidences of the working of natural law. *Science believes that vice, like virtue, is its own reward.* If the old theological doctrine be sound, the scientific doctrine of consequence is a myth.

I submit, then, that retrospective religious worry is not a natural consequence of the natural constitution of man's mind, but is an artificial and factitious evil which depends upon dogmas that are not only without scientific support but run directly counter to the most assured and important of all scientific generalisations — that *causation is universal and reasonable.*

It may be admitted that persons of a certain temperament are liable to brood over the past, and to feel that their present happiness is prejudiced by their memory of certain events which may, indeed, have gone for ever, but which cannot be forgotten or ignored. Looking at the matter in cold blood, these people may admit that such and such an event has no direct influence that is appreciable in the present; but, nevertheless, the memory of it darkens their present lives, and will not be ignored. The object of their worry may have had no relation to any doings of their own, and the question of future punishment or retribution is not raised. In such cases my proposition that the greater part of retrospective worry depends upon religious doctrines is plainly inapplicable. Their only remedies are common-sense and new, worthy,

and powerful mental interests. Yet I do not believe that such cases represent anything but a very small proportion of retrospective worry, the greater part of which depends, I hold, upon a false religious doctrine, and is to be remedied by the establishment in its place of beliefs that are true, and healthy, and little dependent upon mere self-interest. Retrospective worry is almost always selfish: scarcely any one worries about another's past.

This is a truth of the greatest importance, for if men once realised that religious worry is essentially selfish, they would begin to cast doubt upon its title to be regarded as religious at all. "*Love* is the fulfilling of the law," and not concern for self. We are all familiar with George Eliot's sarcastic phrase "other-worldliness." This is often absurdly misquoted and misinterpreted to mean the renunciation of material joys for spiritual blessedness hereafter, but that is very far from being what she meant. By other-worldliness she meant something that can be distinguished only by its *locale* from worldliness; the difference being merely that instead of keeping an eye on the main chance before death the other-worldling looks a little further ahead. But this positive form of anxiety about enjoyment of the next world is less definitely associated with worry than the negative form which fears post-mortem disaster. It is distinctive of the present age, as Cardinal Manning once observed, that the *locale* of worry is being very definitely moved from the after life to the present.

It was to this change of outlook, which he much regretted, that the Cardinal attributed the much greater attention paid in these days to the possibility of improving the conditions of human life on this present earth. But it is somewhat difficult to regret any change of opinion which, for instance, no longer permits the rich to survey unperturbed the preventable miseries of the poor — on the ground that there will be compensation hereafter — but, on the contrary, stirs men's consciences to ask whether, in the presence of human misery, they have not a duty here and now.

But it is in the fear of death that all forms of religious worry find their most terrible and complete expression; nor does the decline of religious worry in general imply, so far as one can judge, a corresponding decline in the fear of death amongst Western peoples. The Oriental, as every one knows, knows no such fear — a fact worthy of much pondering, since it leads the serious student to ask whether the difference is one of inborn temperament or one of education and training. I propose, then, to devote the rest of my space to a study of this fear of death, well knowing that it is possible to refute without reservation the greater portion of common belief on this subject.

Human worry depends upon the presence, in every living thing, of the "will to life" — the desire for life and happiness. This universal proposition is not invalidated by the facts of suicide,

as will be seen if we carefully include the idea of happiness in the proposition. Life, as such, is not the object of desire, but life for what of happiness it brings or may bring. And since, in the overwhelming majority of cases, life is thought to imply sufficient happiness, or the possibility of sufficient happiness, to be worth while, we may here take it that, practically speaking, since life is the object of desire, the greatest and most necessary object of worry and fear is death. The fear of death is thus of the very essence of worry, exhibiting it in its most cogent and universal and apparently — to Occidental people — inevitable form. By the fear of death I mean in the first place to indicate neither "the dread of something after death" nor the love of life; but the fear which has given rise to such a term as "death-agony." It is commonly believed that the act of dying is a painful one, attended with a cup of mortal bitterness such as can be drained by no man twice. Death is the King of Terrors. I here summarily deny the truth of this belief.

In the first place I would have the reader take the word of one who has witnessed many and various deaths, that the term "death-agony" does not correspond to any fact. The immediate cause of death, in all but very exceptional cases, such as accident, is the poisoning of the nervous centres by carbonic acid, which accumulates in the blood owing to the failure of the arrangements for its removal. This gas, let us mark, is an anæsthetic,

and has indeed been employed as such, both locally and otherwise. This property of carbonic acid may be termed, without any philosophic criticism of the assumptions implied in the words, "a merciful provision of Nature." Normal death, if the phrase be permitted, is a painless occurrence, usually preceded by gradual loss of consciousness, entailing no more suffering than going to sleep, which it most closely resembles, literally as well as poetically. The accumulation of this merciful gas often induces muscular contractions or spasms, which are preceded by loss of consciousness, but which may have suggested to uncritical observers that their moribund subject was in "agony." It is not merely that the pain of death is trifling as compared with the physical pain of a scald; it is non-existent. To this general assertion there are very rare exceptions, as in the case of the agonising death by strychnine poisoning, in which the mind is clear almost to the last.

But before dismissing the simple question of physical pain, we may note the existence of the unexamined idea that an instantaneous death has something specially horrible and fearful about it.

Numerous and well-devised psychological experiments, supported by the testimony of thousands of cases in battle and elsewhere, have conclusively proved that in death by bullet or bomb the possibility of consciousness is annihilated before the consciousness either of pain or of imminent dis-

aster can be aroused. The interval of time necessary to develop the feeling of pain is appreciable and measurable by psychologists. The entry of a directly lethal bullet into the brain causes death in a shorter period than avails for any alteration of consciousness. Death in this form assumes its least painful shape. Obviously I speak of only one point of view. I do not refer to the need for preparation implied in the Churchman's petition to be delivered from "sudden death."

In confirmation of my statements, let me quote from Professor Osler of Oxford. His remarks bear both upon the physical pain of death and upon its mental phenomena, but I propose sharply to distinguish between the two. He says:

"As a rule, man dies as he had lived, uninfluenced practically by the thought of a future life. Bunyan could not understand the quiet, easy death of Mr. Badman, and took it as an incontestable sign of his damnation. The ideal death of Cornelius, so beautifully described by Erasmus, is rarely seen. In our modern life the educated man dies usually as did Mr. Denner in Margaret Deland's story — wondering, but uncertain, generally unconscious and unconcerned. I have careful records of about five hundred death-beds, studied particularly with reference to the modes of death, and the sensations of the dying. The latter alone concern us here. Ninety suffered bodily pain or distress of one sort or another, eleven showed mental apprehension, two positive terror, one expressed spiritual exultation, one bitter remorse. The great majority gave no sign one way or the other; like their birth, their death was 'a sleep and a forgetting.' The Preacher was right: in this matter

man 'hath no pre-eminence above the beast' — 'as the one dieth, so dieth the other.'" [1]

Attending first to the question of physical pain, we see that rather more than one in six of the cases recorded by Professor Osler suffered physical pain or distress. Appropriate drugs would have relieved these symptoms, though perhaps not without risk of shortening life. But the quotation is by no means incompatible with the more unqualified statement I have already made regarding the pain of death. For the pain and distress recorded in a proportion of Professor Osler's cases were not, the reader may be assured, related in any way to the act of dying, nor were they experienced *in articulo mortis*. They were just such pain and distress as the patient would have experienced even were he not about to die — *and no worse*. In none of these cases did Nature's anæsthetic fail at the last.

The physical pain of Death itself, then, is a myth, and there is no such thing as "death-agony." I have already hinted at one partial explanation of the horrible delusion which has distressed so many myriads of our kind. But I fear that the widespread belief in the agony of death does not mainly depend upon the erroneous inferences of watchers beside a death-bed. Indeed, such watchers, however uncritical, are usually well aware of what is indeed evident, that the dying man is not the sub-

[1] Ecclesiastes iii, 19.

ject of any agony. We have to attribute this distressing fiction largely to the base imitations of true religion. But it can only be a false religion that needs falsities for its support, and it is not necessary for us to condemn dogmas which humane and thoughtful people are now incapable of holding. The pain of death has long been an object of human worry; but there is no such pain; and thus I am able to give the surely excellent counsel — Fear no longer the non-existent. Would that all worry could be so disposed of! No cure for worry can approach the demonstration that there is nothing whereat to worry: it is worth a thousand of the method which seeks to show that worry is futile — which we all know. When we consider Christian Science we may appreciate the potency of the cure for worry which denies the existence of worry's object. That, at any rate, is open to me, in the case of the worry which is concerned with the physical pain of death.

Let us now pass on to consider a much more difficult and important question — the moral fear of death. It is, of course, obvious that this can exist only in a self-conscious being; it is for those who look before and after that the King has terrors.

No better illustration of this moral fear can be found than in Sir Edward Elgar's inspired setting of Cardinal Newman's "Dream of Gerontius." Here the theme is death, the protagonist a dying man. I know no demonstration of the fear of death so poignant as Elgar's setting of this hor-

rible poem. The Cardinal's conception of the ghastly visions of the dying man, when reinforced by the power of composer and executant, is an overwhelming and must surely be a perdurable and final illustration of the influence of certain religious beliefs upon the minds of those who accept them. Here, indeed, in the death of a pious and fortified believer, is the veritable death-agony, the moral-agony — immeasurably worse than any physical agony — of what Newman may be presumed to have regarded as the orthodox death-bed. Beside this death of Gerontius, which I should like to hope is but the morbid imagining of an abnormal mind, without counterpart in human experience, the most fabulous tales of the horrors of the "infidel death-bed" seem anæmic and trivial. Indeed, they are mythical *ex hypothesi,* for only the believer in future retribution can fear to die, much though he may love to live or may sorrow for his beloved ones' bereavement.

The fear of death, then, may thus be briefly analysed. In so far as it is a physical fear, it is baseless; the only peaceful and painless part of a fatal illness may be its termination.

In so far as it is a moral fear, it is conditioned by the mental power of anticipation.[1] It follows that there is no horror in the contemplation of the countless millions of deaths that preceded the

[1] "Cowards die many times before their deaths;
The valiant never taste of death but once."
—*Julius Caesar*, ii, 2.

advent of man upon the earth, or those of the lower animals to-day. The death of a rose or a kitten may be sad, but neither is horrible.

Nor is it horrible "to cease upon the midnight with no pain." The fear of death, as death, is due only when it is believed that thereafter may or must be unhappiness — whether conditioned by the worm that dieth not, or by eternal alienation from the Deity.

I conclude that the fear of death is in full decline. The genius of that most illustrious priest Copernicus, nearly four centuries ago, dealt it a terrible blow, by destroying the geography of the Dantean Inferno. Since he made it impossible to believe that hell is a place, it must be concluded that it is a state. According to Petronius Arbiter "it was fear first made the gods" — *Primus in orbe deos fecit timor*, and it was assuredly the vague fear so characteristic of early human thinking which has made that great cause for fear which we now see to be nothing but the baseless fabric of a nightmare. That nightmare has passed, never to return; nor need the most orthodox believer hesitate to accept the biblical word that "His mercy endureth for ever." The religion of the future will be no longer a cause of worry and fear and agony of soul, but their supreme and final conqueror.

XXI

WORRY AS A MAKER OF RELIGIONS

At the very moment that we begin to study the beginnings of religion in the remote past of mankind, we discover a fact which is of extraordinary significance to us. This fact, now well attested by anthropological research in many fields, was discerned by the happy insight of certain writers, long before anthropology, as we now know it, had come into being. The old Roman writer, Petronius Arbiter, declared that "Fear first made the gods" — *Primus in orbe deos fecit timor:* whilst we find it stated in the "Leviathan" of Hobbes, that "the feare of things invisible is the naturall Seed of Religion." As Mr. Edward Clodd says in his admirable little book upon Animism,[1] "In the degree that anything is unknown, it remains a source of dread, and therefore of evil, since from 'feare of the invisible' spring the feelings of inferiority, helplessness, and dependence which man's surroundings quicken, and which are the raw materials of theologies and rituals."

As has been remarked elsewhere, it is only the self-conscious creature that is religious: a dog has

[1] "Animism, the Seed of Religion," in the series, Religions, Ancient and Modern; Constable, 1905.

no use for a religion; man is not only "a religious animal," but the only religious animal. Now, in studying the relations of worry and religion — the word "worry" being used in the wider sense — we make the capital discovery that worry about the unknown, the mysterious, the uncontrollable, is the prime cause of all primitive religions. The self-conscious creature is able to look before, able to project himself into the future, even if, in early stages, it be only into to-morrow, and the prospect breeds within him certain emotions of apprehension, fear, or worry, from which spring religious systems. The counsel to "Take no thought for the morrow, sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," can never be followed, even if it ought to be followed, by human beings, who are truly human not in virtue of the erect attitude, the opposable thumb, or the large cerebrum, but in virtue of self-consciousness.

Let us briefly consider the outlook of primitive man. Volumes of nonsense have been written about the happy, careless, unsophisticated life of the "child of Nature," — the primitive, virtuous savage, living "*au plein air*," the firmament his ceiling, the stars his night-lights, his virtue his only garment. It is argued that it is folly to be wise — ignorance is your true bliss. The happy savage has simple and easily satisfied wants, he does not suffer from *ennui*, which is peculiar to highly developed minds — a dog is never bored, nor a rustic — and he lives in happy communion

with his mother, Nature, who readily and graciously supplies his simple and honest needs. The true "fall of man," we are told, was the fall from this "state of Nature," to the state of civilisation, sophistication, and vice.

All such doctrines, however, belong to a pre-scientific age; they may most succinctly and accurately be described as "tommy-rot" — "nonsense," a purely negative term, is too good for them. When we come to study the psychology of primitive man, — or of the primitive men who are to be found in abundance amongst ourselves to-day, though clothed as to the body, and veneered as to the mind, — we discover that ignorance is not bliss. On the contrary, wherever there is ignorance there is superstition. A primal law of the mind was forgotten by those who maintained that ignorance is bliss, and that the ignorant savage was therefore happy and enviable. Ignorance is literally *not-knowing-ness:* but it implies a most ridiculous lack of observation to suppose that a man who is ignorant of any matter therefore holds no beliefs on the subject. On the contrary, it is all but a necessity of the mind that a man *must believe something:* and superstition is the creed of ignorance.

In late years, here a professional philosopher, and there a wise man without such pretensions, have been able to acquire that ability to *suspend judgment* which, as Huxley remarked, is characteristic only of the trained mind. These cases,

however, are novel and exceptional, and may be entirely left out of account here.

The truth, then, is that ignorance is not a neutral state, but involves something positive; in general, not to know the truth is to believe what is false, and that is superstition. If you cannot catch a savage and observe him, live with a child and learn there how the mind of man develops.

If, then, we take a general view of superstition, expressing itself in the beginnings of the countless false religions which have played their malign part in the history of mankind, we discover that its prime cause is the emotional state called worry or fear, and that the superstition, whatever its particular form may be, is invented in order, so far as possible, to alleviate these fears by the invention of some method which, if practised, will make them unnecessary. We find little enough in primitive religion of anything that can be called morality. Most if not all primitive religions are rather immoral than moral, and morality, of course, is æons older than any religion, for motherhood is æons older than man, who is, indeed, its greatest product. Thus the worry of the savage is not worry about sin or the sinfulness of sin; it is not indeed religious worry, as I have used that term in another chapter. Religion has not yet reached the stage at which it begins to create new causes for worry. The fear of the savage is not retrospective but anticipative. He lives in a constant state of uncertainty, never knowing what may happen to him

next. Every natural phenomenon of any magnitude is a source of alarm to him; lightning and thunder, storms and clouds, eclipses, shooting stars, even permanent phenomena such as rocks, mountains, trees, and rivers, — all these constitute for him sources of fear. It is, perhaps, not themselves that he fears, so much as the personal, maleficent forces which he conceives to be behind them. There is very positive evidence which leads us to believe that for a long period in the history of man the religion of fear was the only religion he knew.

New and greater terrors were added to primitive life when ancestor-worship was invented. Says Mr. Clodd, " The belief in spirits and in their survival after death is shown to have sufficing cause of origin in dreams about them, and to be strengthened by the phenomena of shadows, reflections, and echoes, and by sundry kinds of disease, all of which, like death itself, are attributed to maleficent agents, theories of natural causes being impossible to the savage mind." It would be entirely erroneous for us to conceive of primitive ancestor-worship as the expression of a beautiful reverence and affection for the departed. Ancestor-worship, on the contrary, was a product of worry or fear. There was reason to believe, the savage thought, that the spirits of the dead retain an interest in the affairs of the living, and are able to exact from the living a terrible tribute unless their wishes are regarded. Thus began that appalling sacrifice of the living to the dead which, in its thousand forms,

material and spiritual, is one of the few most salient facts in the history of mankind.

Hence it comes about that the " feare of things invisible " is invested with a new and more terrible object. For things invisible do not now merely consist of non-human powers, resident in lightning or in rock, but consist of disembodied human spirits which have a far greater interest in the affairs of men, and which may reasonably be expected to exert far greater powers. The chief who was a mighty warrior in his lifetime, punishing the slightest disobedience with death, is far more to be feared now that he himself, whilst still retaining his love of power, has assumed a form which is not merely invisible, — so that it is impossible to be certain that the smallest and most secret act is not observed, — but is also invulnerable, immune alike to dagger or poison. Only those who interest themselves in the close and detailed study of savage ways of thought can realise how potent, how constantly present, and how disabling is the " feare of things invisible " when these come to include the ghosts of the departed.

This fear, then, breeds the religion called ancestor-worship. The use of the word " ancestor " is misleading, for it suggests ancestor-worship as we see it in the teachings of Confucius and in the contemporary practice of the Chinese. But this, which has many beautiful aspects, is a relatively modern transfiguration and limitation of primitive ancestor-worship. It would be better to use the phrase

"the worship of the dead," and the point on which I desire to insist is this, — that *the worship of the dead is a product of the fear of the dead.* We, who regard our dead with feelings of affection and regret, may find it difficult to realise the character of the emotions from which the worship of the dead originally sprang, but it is easy for me to produce abundant authorities which prove that I am justified in ascribing to worry or fear the prime cause of this most important ingredient of religious beliefs. I will content myself by quoting the conclusion reached by Dr. J. G. Frazer, the author of "The Golden Bough," who is incomparably the greatest living student of early religion. He says that "the attentions bestowed on the dead sprang not so much from the affections as from the fears of the survivors. For, as every one knows, ghosts of the unburied dead haunt the earth, and make themselves exceedingly disagreeable, especially to their undutiful relatives." "Ask the negro," says Paul du Chaillu, "where is the spirit of his great-grandfather, he says he does not know, *it is done.* Ask him about the spirits of his father or brother who died yesterday; then he is full of fear and terror." [1]

Primitive religion and primitive superstition are, of course, one and the same, and we have to remember that the primitive character of a religion is not dependent upon the particular century or epoch in which it flourishes. The religion of a

[1] For these quotations I am again indebted to Mr. Clodd.

primitive or undeveloped mind will assuredly be a primitive religion even though it be held by a man of Anglo-Saxon blood in London or in Boston in the year 1907. Now just as it has been easy to show that worry played a great part in the causation of primitive religious superstitions, which were organised into the religious systems of Red Indians, Melanesians, Negroes, or Maoris, thus affording historical warrant for the title of this chapter — so it is only too easy to show that even in our own day in countless instances, worry and fear operating upon the minds of the ignorant and uneducated, produce in them by far the greater part of their religion. There is a pathetic belief abroad that if a professor of natural philosophy in a Protestant theological college and an illiterate senile Irishwoman both call themselves Christians, their respective religions are one and the same. This is only one more instance of the fashion in which we are deceived by words. As George Meredith somewhere says, "naming saves a lot of thinking," and it is true in this case. If we pierce below the common name we find differences of belief and practice so vast that we realise the name to be nothing less than false. The superstitions typical of primitive religion flourish to-day amongst the ignorant in forms which can be immediately recognised as absolutely identical in origin and all but identical in detail. It is true that the holder of these beliefs may be known as an Episcopalian or a Roman Catholic or an Esoteric Buddhist or a

Christian Scientist or a Calvinist. Ignorant people of lowly mental stature are to be found included under all these names, and the lower the type of mind the smaller are the differences exhibited in different specimens of it. Difference of opinion can only exist where there is high mental development. Primitive folk all think alike and all think wrong.

Surveying, then, the whole field of contemporary religions, and ignoring the fact that exponents of Creed No. 1 constantly expatiate upon the fundamental differences which separate them from the exponents of Creed No. 14 or 23, we may make bold to draw a line which divides us all in an entirely new direction. The obvious but superficial manner of classifying mankind, so far as religion is concerned, would be in a series of columns, each headed by the name of a particular religion, such as Mohammedanism or Buddhism. The adherents of each cult might then be arranged in order of social status, education, or the like. But suppose that we had them arranged in order of mental development; then the critical student would be inclined to pay very scant attention to the vertical division into columns and to make a new division by means of horizontal lines. All above the first line thus drawn would be men of fine minds; all below the last line thus drawn would be men of primitive minds. A moment's thought will show that the essential resemblances in religious belief between all the members of the first group, even

though their religious labels varied widely, would be far greater than those between the successive members of any one column, even though they all agreed so far as the label was concerned. In other words, a Christian philosopher and a Buddhist philosopher are immeasurably nearer to one another in religion — as each of them is well aware — than a Christian philosopher and an illiterate, mentally-negligible Christian. For between the philosopher and the illiterate, of whatever creed, there is no less a gap than that between the thought of to-day and the thought, if thought it could be called, of two hundred thousand years ago.

Now, what I desire to maintain is this, that if surveying the whole of mankind we include in one group all that great majority which would come below one or other of the horizontal lines in our classification, we may fairly describe all these persons as professing primitive religion. The mere matter of the label which they affect will not concern us. The primitive mind must have a primitive religion. All primitive minds are alike, and there is thus only one primitive religion — a multitude of labels notwithstanding.

The chain of causation is very easily recognised; the first link is the human power to "look before," exhibited in a being which loves life and happiness; the second is the fear and worry thus generated. So far the factors are common to all men, primitive or progressive; but in the case of those whom we are now considering we have to recog-

nise the great factor of ignorance. The unknown is the terrible; it is fair, though it seems hard, to say that the intellect or reason may practically be ignored in considering the psychical behaviour of the lowest orders of man, including what we are pleased to call civilised man. Amongst the rude majority there may certainly be intelligence enough for the purposes of reading and writing and a little more, but this is only a very subordinate and impotent factor in the deeper life of such persons. Unguided by reason, they fall strictly into line with the primitive savage, and exhibit that "feare of things invisible," which is alike the seed of his religion and of theirs. This religion displays all the characters familiar to students of what is commonly understood by primitive religion. This we may readily understand if we recognise that what we see before us is primitive religion produced in primitive minds in our own day in precisely the same fashion as it was produced in similar minds in the past which anthropologists are studying. Indeed any anthropologist of repute might do worse than devote himself to a systematic account of primitive religion as it is generated by fear of the invisible in the lowest orders of men and women as they are to be found in various classes of society to-day. It would be a matter of no small interest, thereafter, to institute a critical comparison between the beliefs and practices thus discovered and the beliefs and practices of the rapidly disappearing Australian Aboriginal, the Kaffir, the

Esquimaux or the Bushman. The differences would be of detail merely.

I have used the phrase "classes of society," and it is well to remember that the religious classification of mankind which I propose has very small concern with the vulgar classification to which nearly all of us bow the knee. It costs me less than an hour and a half to accompany my wife to Regent Street on a bright afternoon, and there, in the centre of the largest and wealthiest city in history, the heart of an Empire which would scarcely notice the sudden addition to it of the whole population of the Roman Empire at its greatest, — there, where, if anywhere, the naked Australian blackfellow would furnish a study in contrast, what do I find? In a word, I find the most blatant and indisputable evidence that such a blackfellow — of whom we think as a curious survival from an epoch so remote that Rome and Athens and Knossos and Babylon and Susa were far more remote than we are from them — might strike up a friendship, based on community of ideas, with scores and scores of women in Parisian gowns, who would look at him as they would look at a baboon. True, there is little outward resemblance between a pretty Englishwoman, the product of dressmaking in Paris and manicure in Bond Street, on the one hand, and a naked savage with long black hair down to his waist, a flattened nose and a black skin, on the other hand; but it is not physical resemblances or differences that count, and

sometimes one is apt to believe that the evolution of the body is a much easier and more rapid affair than the evolution of the mind, which we should desire to be concomitant with it. So far as physique is concerned, there are æons of evolution between the blackfellow and the Englishwoman. Indeed, he is in many respects much nearer to the ape than he is to her.

But so far as mind is concerned they might walk down Regent Street arm in arm. It is true that she can play bridge, whilst he, perhaps, can only count up to five. There has been a superficial development of the reason in her which opportunity has denied to him; but that is a trifle. Get deep down into the mind of each, and you find the same outlook upon life, the same fear of the invisible.

For witness take the sandwichmen of Regent Street, who shamble in the gutter whilst my lady walks on the pavement on one side of them or glides in her electric brougham on the other. They advertise the circumstance that this man and that woman are prepared to read the hand or to gaze into the future by means of a crystal or "psychometry" or the like. A study of the advertisements in the newspapers confirms the evidence of the gutters of Regent Street. Inquiry shows that persons who thus live on the fear of the invisible are able not merely to spend large sums on advertisements, but also to engage luxurious rooms in parts of London where rents are monstrous, and

to enjoy expensive holidays. They charge fees which the wealthy give only under protest and with many grudges even to the most skilful and conscientious of consulting physicians.

True it is that the women — for they are mostly women — who consult these imposters, will be found at a fashionable church on Sunday morning gracefully joining in the responses and enjoying the music, which to the blackfellow, I grant, would be mere foolishness. It is by no means to be compared with his own tom-tom. True it is, also, that these women are included under the same label as St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas and Newman and Kingsley and Canons Driver and Cheyne; but this only shows how much thinking naming saves. The woman whose fear of the invisible, acting in an ignorant mind of low inherent capacity, causes her to reject the most attractive residence that is numbered 13, to consult palmists, to avoid haunted houses, and so on, may call herself by the same title as the hard-headed "Angelic Doctor" of the thirteenth century. But her religion is not really within æons of his. It is primitive religion, the child of ignorance and worry. She and the blackfellow may clasp hands at the same altar.

Now there arises at this point a question which must often have occurred to any thoughtful reader. Let it be admitted for the sake of argument that, under whatever name, the religion of the lowest orders of the modern mind is none other than an

adaptation of primitive superstition. Let it be granted, also, that primitive religion as we see it amongst ourselves to-day is not really a product of education or tradition, but is really a new creation of each primitive mind to-day as it was in the past. Now or then, here or at the Antipodes, given a primitive mind, ignorant of all essentials, placed in contact with Nature, with darkness, light and shadow, sound and silence — primitive religion will be generated. But if this be so, and furthermore, if it can be shown that the religion even of intermediate orders of intellect is built upon no securer foundation, are we to accept the dictum of a recent writer — himself a metaphysician — who boldly declares that no one but a metaphysician has any right to a religion?

This is a hard saying, and we cannot accept it, yet we must recognise the truth which the writer so forcibly expresses. It is the fact that the really vital and effective part of the religion of many to-day is a tissue of credulities and practices — whether or not introduced into one of the great religious systems, such as Christianity, is immaterial — that have no valid origin whatever. Creations of worry may take on a rational guise and may even effect an alliance with philosophic or logical systems, but they cannot be accepted at their face value. Truth is not so discovered; the origin of these beliefs suffices to damn them.

As every one is well aware, there exists what, in academic language, may be called the *pragmatic*

argument for religion. Readers of Prof. William James and of lesser philosophers will know what I mean. It is the argument expressed in the common opinion of men that "religion is a good thing for women and children"; whilst Tennyson expresses it more subtly in the line "Leave thou thy sister when she prays." The argument, in short, is that, whether or not religion be true, at any rate it may be tolerated, if not welcomed, so long as it proves *useful*. This covertly involves the argument that the false may be useful and raises indeed the whole question of survival-value, which I must postpone to a subsequent volume. It is possible here, however, to reach a very definite position regarding the utility argument in favour of primitive or puerile religious beliefs or superstitions as they are seen amongst us to-day.

My position is that, accepting for the sake of argument the utility doctrine — the doctrine that the thing must be accepted if it is useful — we are still able to condemn primitive religion as we see it in our own times. As we have observed, this is a product of worry and fear. It has little place in the minds of those who scarcely know such emotions: it is dominant in the minds of those from whom they are rarely absent.[1] If, then, it were possible to demonstrate that these superstitions — or let us call them falsehoods and be frank — did actually suffice to avert and relieve

[1] We may recall Pope's fine line about a god "such as the souls of cowards might conceive."

the worry and fear of which they are the fruit — then, indeed, the utility argument would be applicable.

But it is only too easy to demonstrate that these falsehoods follow the custom of falsehoods in that they do more harm than good. Primitive religion is certainly a product of fear and worry, but they are as certainly generated by it. The religion of fear produces fear. Ignorance is not bliss, for ignorance leads to superstition, and superstition breeds more worry and misery and fear than were ever produced merely by man's foreknowledge of death or his intercourse with nature. The story of Frankenstein is true — the creations of man's own mind are far more terrible to him than any reality.

Sentences may be conceived and words written down and read, but fortunately the imagination is unable to conceive the whole horror and pathos of the unnecessary agony that man-made superstition has wrought in the life of man. The powdered bones of the dead go to constitute the soil upon which the living tread, and as we contemplate the emotions and the deeds of which the life of our ancestors was composed, we feel anew the force of Macbeth's tragic words:

> "To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow
> Creeps in its petty pace from day to day,
> To the last syllable of recorded time;
> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death."

Fools, indeed! Scribblers have amused themselves by calculating the number of hours or months in the life of an average man that represent the time devoted to, let us say, shaving. But would not the world stand appalled if some one were to estimate in centuries or in hundreds of thousands of years the total amount of time spent by human beings — calculated and added together for each individual it would amount to billions of years — in praying for mercy to non-existent gods, in agony of soul at the anticipation of punishments and tortures and unslaked fires which do not exist, never have existed, and never will exist, in murder and poison and actual torture on behalf of doctrines which every educated man of to-day knows to have been lies rotten from end to end, in sacrifice, sacrifice of life, of the lives of others, of sheep and cattle and children and little babies, demanded to appease the wrath of deities *that were nothing;* sacrifices, too, of slaves and wives and warriors sent after some Chief or King in order to serve his ghost; or, most pathetic of all, the agonies endured by loving souls who have thought that those who were dearer to them than life itself had earned eternal doom by the infringement of some divine decree — a decree made by men, and for which there is no "credible god" [1] to answer.

Indeed, the truth is that wisdom alone is justified of her children, and that superstition is not.

[1] The phrase is Mr. George Meredith's.

Her abominable brood are things more accursed than any spawn of cholera germs. *E pur si muove,* I freely grant — the world still moves on. Time was when all belief was superstition, nor can that time ever return, but the fact remains that primitive religion or primitive superstition, the fruit of fear, abounds amongst us to-day and is none the less, but rather the more, hurtful because it is often found to be the essential creed of " those who profess and call themselves Christians." The bad thing is none the better for being cloaked by a great name.

Here, then, is this fruit of worry and seed of more worry; what can we say to one who asks whether there is a remedy? The answer plainly must be that there is a remedy, and that it is the remedy which has already proved effective in banishing such fears and worries and sources of impotence from the lives of those who lead the world to-day. The remedy for superstition is knowledge, the remedy for nescience is science. The gutters of Regent Street bear witness that, despite all our boast of education and higher education for men and women too, we have yet far to go. Frankly, it ought not to be possible that a sane Englishwoman, living in London in the twentieth century, and able to read and write, should consult a palmist in the matter of her future. As Mr. Clodd remarks, in an image which — he will forgive me for saying — he could not have made more accurate if he had spent a couple of years in dissection of the human

body, a man might as well try to predict the future from the creases in his trousers — creases in the trousers and lines in the palm are due to precisely the same causes — and for the matter of that I would much rather predict a man's future from the state of his trousers than from the lines in his palm, for whereas the latter are anatomical accidents with which his mind and character have no earthly connection, the creases in a man's trousers will at any rate tell one whether or not he uses a trousers' press, and from that something may be inferred.

Palmistry, however, is only one leading example of many imbecilities. I will not venture to introduce parallels to it from so-called religious beliefs which are commonly considered quite respectable and conventional if not nowadays *de rigueur*.

But ere we conclude this chapter we must consider the part which worry plays in the making of certain religious beliefs which cannot be called primitive — cannot be labelled with the hard name of superstition. Whereas the lower religions are the products of superstitious fear and, in their turn, breed more fear, we may distinguish the higher religions as those to which men are impelled by more reasonable fears. One could not well expect to get much good out of a religion which took its origin in the fear of shadows or eclipses, but the case is very different with religious beliefs and practices which owe their origin

to reasonable worries and reasonable fears. Hence it is that the value of religion for life is found constantly to increase in proportion as the believer rises in psychical development and in proportion as his religion becomes reasonable and his deity credible.

It is not necessary for us to choose in illustration any particular member of the group of higher religions, but we may profit, I think, by simply considering one type of religious practice, common to all religions, high or low, ancient or modern, and observing its character and value in various cases. Unless I am much mistaken this study is worthy of a separate chapter.

XXII

WORRY AND PRAYER

THERE is no more common character and feature of religious practice than prayer, and there is no better proof of the proposition that our judgment upon worry as a maker of religions must vary according to the psychical development of the religious believer in successive cases. Without confusing the issue by the use of labels, and without reference to any particular country or any particular epoch, let us study the relations of worry and prayer according as we find them in low minds and in high minds.

It does not matter whether we choose as instances of lowly mental development an illiterate peasant of our own time, a savage of our own time, a Babylonian of six thousand years ago, or a child of any race or time. In all these cases we find certain primitive religious ideas, generated by worry concerning the unknown and the future or, in the phrase of Hobbes, by "feare of the invisible." In all such instances the practice of prayer is witnessed, and in all such instances the prayer is concerned with events which fall within the

sphere of natural causation, but which, by the primitive mind, are not recognised to do so; and in all such cases the prayer is directed to a being or person or deity or god who does not exist. There are thus two tremendous futilities involved in each case, and these are worthy of closer consideration.

It is recognised by us that there are certain things about which it is idle to pray. No one prays that the sun shall not set. We realise that that event is within the sphere of natural causation and that supernatural interference with it is not to be expected. We still pray for fine weather or for rain, in our churches, but that is merely because meteorology is a backward science. Those who study the subject know that the weather is as definitely determined by natural causes as the fall of an unsupported object to the earth or the succession of night and day.

But the fears and cares and worries of the lowly mind are all concerned with these objective things, — questions of weather or of health or of material success. The Roman Catholic child is taught to pray to St. Anthony when it has lost anything, and is worried about that, and the intercession of saints and angels is constantly besought on behalf of mundane, material circumstances which are as definitely determined by natural law as the seasons or the tides.

Similarly with the case of many natural phenomena which excite fear in the mind of the savage

or the child or the illiterate.[1] Prayer will not arrest a thunder storm nor hasten nor avert an eclipse. In short, it is coming to be recognised by all who have had anything worth calling an education that within the sphere of natural causation — of events outside the self — prayer has no place. But it is entirely with such events that the prayer of the primitive-minded in all ages and places is concerned. We conclude, therefore, that religious systems generated by the desires and fears of primitive folk are unlikely to be of any substantial value for life. Indeed they have been of far less than no value, so far as happiness is concerned, and may be regarded with respect by the sociologist only in so far as he can recognise them to have been of some disciplinary value in lowly stages of civilisation.

But as man reaches higher levels, his concerns become less material and more spiritual. The really worthy man is much more seriously and fundamentally interested in the state of his mind than in the state of his banking account; in the health of his outlook upon life, in the spiritual sense, rather than in the fatness of the oxen which his material eyes may see and may rejoice to own. Now let us compare the mind of a man and the banking account of a man in this respect.

The primitive man, including the primitive part

[1] I use the word "illiterate" for want of a better. There are, of course, thousands of people who can read and write, the primitive quality of whose minds is in no wise elevated by the possession of those very mechanical accomplishments.

even of the highly developed man, must necessarily worry at times about material prosperity. This worry may be a cause of the religious practice called prayer in many cases. It is true that only very small children pray that they may find a sixpenny piece in a pocket which they know to be hitherto empty, but though the prayer may take forms somewhat less naïve than this it is substantially the same. This kind of prayer accomplishes nothing, whatever the colour of the suppliant's skin or the name under which he addresses his deity.

Secondly, the prayer generated by these material kinds of worry is futile, not merely because it deals with things and events which have natural causes and natural consequences, but also because the beings to whom it is addressed do not exist. For thinking men there is no evidence whatever in favour of the existence of any kind of powers that interfere with natural causation. I am the last person to assert that there is no Unseen Reality, but I do positively assert that the seen and the temporal cannot be placed in opposition to the Eternal but are Its expressions. And we may assume that It knows Its own business best.

But contrast the kind of worry that leads to the religious practice called prayer in people of higher psychical type. In the first place, a man of this type will find no occasion to pray about shadows or witcheries or darkness or the creases in the skin of his palms. These things inspire no worry or fear in him, and therefore produce no religious

sentiment or practice. It is only primitive religion that worry about such things inspires. Yet, again, such a man is not found to pray to St. Anthony or any one else about a mislaid purse nor yet about an inadequate bank account. He recognises that material questions are not fit subjects for prayer. Material facts and, indeed, all exterior events, happen in accord with eternal iron laws of which the law of gravitation is only one illustration. It is not worth while to pray that a valuable watch accidentally dropped from the top of a tower shall not fall; and all the material things about which primitive people pray are precisely comparable with this. On the other hand, prayer is a spiritual or psychical act, and it is therefore with the spiritual that its proper concern lies. Religious people of the higher type do not pray about their banking accounts, nor about any such material things, for these do not vitally concern them. The worries and fears and anxieties and desires of such people are in another realm altogether. They are concerned about weakness of will, lack of fortitude, selfishness, imperfection of sympathy, carelessness about the highest things, preoccupation with the material and the sordid, or lack of charity. These are the things which worry such people; these are the things about which they pray, and it is prayer about these things that constantly and triumphantly justifies itself.[1]

[1] *How*, is not my present concern.

Thus, after all the hard and cynical things which were said in the last chapter about the kind of religion produced by material worry in lowly and material minds and about the disastrous consequences of such materialism, — for it is nothing but practical materialism though it assumes the name of religion, — we now discern that, in loftier minds which lead the inner life, there may be a noble worry about spiritual things which, according to the law that "like begets like," breeds a noble and spiritual form of religious belief and practice which in its turn is abundantly justified of its children; and he would be an ignorant and norrow-minded creature who was prepared to deny the proposition that the name by which the Eternal is addressed in such prayers — which are as often aspirations as prayers — is of little consequence. There may or may not be a Yahweh as he was conceived by the Semitic prophets; there may or may not be a Buddha as his worshippers conceive him; there may or may not be an Allah as the pious Mussulman conceives him; — but the spiritual religion which, in persons of the religious temper, is bred of anxiety about spiritual things, does assuredly correspond to some Reality in the very heart of things, all discordance of labels notwithstanding. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

XXIII

THE FUTURE OF THE RACE

WORRY is, in general, a wholly futile and evil thing, but we have already seen that there is such a thing as normal worry, and we cannot fail to recognise that the reasonable anticipation of future evil, urging to efforts for its prevention, is a wise and effective means towards the happiness of mankind. It is such worry that I wish to consider in this very brief chapter.

Disease and sin and sorrow were accepted by the Greek philosophers and dramatists as necessary and inevitable "dispensations" of the higher powers; they might be illustrated or commented upon, or even fitted into a rational system of belief, but the idea of removing them was never presented to the Greek mind, — a fact which is seen to be the more remarkable and significant the more it is considered. The conception of posterity, as a fact of the future, was recognised by them, as it has been ever since, but we may long ponder over the curious fact that this conception, until modern days, aroused only a selfish emotion. The single thought seems to have been, "What will posterity think of us?" Another form of it occurs in the case of Francis Bacon, who left it to posterity to judge his

case. No idea of a duty to posterity, no recognition of the fact that the present is not only the child of the past but also the parent of the future, played any part in the thoughts of our ancestors. Their only interest in us was concerned with the hope that we would think well of them, — as if we had nothing better to think about, — and it may be presumed that the vast majority of our predecessors would have been willing to echo the characteristic reply of Napoleon, "What has posterity done for me?"

In short, whilst our forefathers worried about many things, necessary and unnecessary, at least they never worried themselves with worry about *us!*

The thought of our duty to the future is indeed characteristic of our time; and it has added a new and subtler cause of worry to life in these days. We may still think of posterity's verdict upon us, but we recognise that our only warrant for doing so is that the thought may shame us into action on their behalf.

The sense of our duty towards the future may take various forms. Perhaps the least creditable, though I am far from saying that it is not creditable, is an interest in the future of the nation to which we belong, — a form of patriotism. The anxious patriot is a very interesting study. One would write of this kind of worry with more respect were it not that, as a rule, this form of patriotism is ill-directed, either owing to defective knowledge,

as in the case of those who think that the national stock is degenerating; to defective recognition of the effects of age, as in the case of the *laudator temporis acti,* who thinks that everything is going to the dogs because things are not done exactly as they were when he was young; or to defects in the moral nature, as in the case of those who think that any decline in the spirit of militancy presages coming evil. But I have no space for an essay on the fascinating topic of anxious patriotism and worried patriots.

A much higher form of a noble care for the future is found in the case of those who concern themselves with the immediately succeeding generation, — the rare men and women, conscious of some mental defect or tendency towards disease, who deliberately renounce the joys of parentage because they recognise their duty to the unborn.

Then, again, there is the sentiment expressed in a letter of Charles Darwin's: —

"I quite agree how humiliating the slow progress of man is, but every one has his own pet horror, and this slow progress or even personal annihilation sinks in my mind into insignificance compared with the idea, or rather I presume certainty, of the sun some day cooling and we all freezing. To think of the progress of millions of years, with every continent swarming with good and enlightened men, all ending in this, and with probably no fresh start until this our planetary system has been again converted into red-hot gas. *Sic transit gloria mundi,* with a vengeance." . . .[1]

[1] More Letters of Charles Darwin, Vol. II., pp. 260, 261.

Such concern about the future of the race is not merely a form of worry new to our time, nor yet is it merely a new and elevated form of moral sentiment; it is a force that makes for action, as we have already seen many other forms of worry to be. But in this case the force is to be welcomed, for the action which it induces is beneficent. Our children's children will rise up and call us blessed; this very generation of ours will be remembered "to the last syllable of recorded time" as the first which consciously and deliberately made the future — the future which it would not live to see — its own highest concern. It is a truly noble emotion, well worthy of the being who can look before and after.

Mr. Francis Galton is devoting the unchecked energy of his later years to the study of what he calls Eugenics, the possibility of improving the human race mentally, morally, and physically, by the selection of its best individuals, rather than a mere haphazard assortment, for the supreme duty of the continuance of the race. He suggests that a passion for Eugenics is well worthy of incorporation in the religion of the future, and no thoughtful person will be found to question the proposition that our worry about the happiness and worth of those who are to follow us is a noble emotion, promising great benefit of the highest order to them, and tending to elevate ourselves, also, in the scale of moral and rational beings.

XXIV

THE TRIUMPH OF RELIGION

In preceding chapters we have endeavoured to study religious worry — the mental distress of various kinds which is the product of various religious dogmas; and secondly, the development of religious systems as the consequences of fear and worry. Here, however, we must approach the question on a totally different and immeasurably higher plane; from forms and externals let us turn to the substance and essence of religion.

The great crisis through which many religious dogmas have been passing during the last fifty years is due, as the reader knows, to certain striking developments of science. Not a few people "of little faith" have inclined to the view that men would have been much better without these scientific developments which, as they think, are worth little or nothing in themselves, and seem to threaten religion itself. At the other extreme are "many free thinkers whose attitude to the religious problem proves how little sense they have of the deepest human needs. They think that a form of life, such as was religion in her golden ages, involving the concentrated interplay of all faculties

and impulses, can be deleted from life without any loss thereto. The whole spiritual life would suffer were such a form of it to perish."[1] Those who fancy, then, that science has made an end of religion and those who welcome this supposition may be contemptuously ignored here. Their thinking upon the matter is as superficial as that of the theologian who fancies, or seems to fancy, that Christianity has no further message or purpose in the world if the first chapter of Genesis be no longer accepted as literal truth.

On the contrary, science has done a great service to religion — in accordance with the general principle that every new truth serves all other truth — in causing it to examine anew its own nature, validity, and purpose in the world. The supremely great study thus indicated is now commonly known as the philosophy of religion. It has lately been prosecuted by great and sincere thinkers in every part of the world where thought flourishes and is reverenced. Of these men some have been professed theologians whilst others have been psychologists or unattached philosophers. They include representatives of many different creeds and sects and they have obtained the most magnificent agreement as to certain fundamental truths. If we recognise that amongst these religious thinkers are included theologians of all schools, philosophers of all schools, psychologists, sociologists, students of ethics and anthropologists,

[1] Höffding.

we may realise, perhaps, how great is the significance of this agreement.

As the highest thought now sees it, religion is, in the first place, a thing that can never die out of human life. It is a product of the deepest and the highest in the nature of man. In all its countless forms, ancient and modern — forms even more various than are indicated by the differing modes of worship of the Roman Catholic and the Quaker — religion expresses some fundamental truth which would survive, though all past and present expressions of it should utterly disappear. I have already quoted from the latest, and, as I think, the greatest contribution to this subject,[1] and I shall do well indeed if I am able to direct any reader to feed his soul from the same source. Let us turn now to the historical facts of religion that bear upon the subject of this book.

Our business is not to argue as to the truth of any religious dogma — whether of Fetichism or Methodism; it is the equally important business, in practice at any rate, of ascertaining what religion has actually stood for in human life. We have already seen the dark side of the account. It may appear to some that the description of religion so called as a cause of needless agony of soul constitutes an appalling indictment against religion, but it is not such. On the contrary, it is yet one

[1] "The Philosophy of Religion," by Dr. Harald Höffding, Professor of Philosophy in the University of Copenhagen. (English translation, Macmillan & Co.)

more terrible illustration of the truth expressed in the Latin phrase, *corruptio optimi pessima.* The more utterly beyond price is true religion, the more disastrous are its corruptions; but if there is any clear and irresistible prophecy in human thought as we survey it to-day, it is that these corruptions have had their day; in the deliberate desire to hasten their end I have penned a previous chapter. Let us now, with a gesture of relief and disgust, cease to consider them further.

It is, then, the historic fact, demonstrated by human experience everywhere and at all times, that religion, "pure and undefiled," can make the desert blossom as the rose, can conquer death and pain and sorrow, can make earth Heaven and human life Divine. It has done this under many guises, or in spite of many guises. If the reader dare question this, let him read the life of Buddha as well as that of St. Francis, and Plato's account of the death of Socrates as well as Bunyan's account of the pilgrims' passage across the dark river: "Then said the other, Be of good cheer, my brother, I feel the bottom, and it is good." Bunyan himself, we may remember, died in perfect peace. Despite all differences of time and place and external form, differences of race and education, and outlook upon the material world, it is surely one and the same ultimate reality that can accomplish such great deeds.

It is hard work reading much of Plato, and some of my readers may have made the attempt

and failed. Let me then quote for them the last page of the dialogue (The Phædo) wherein he describes the manner in which Socrates, its victim, made imperishable the history of one of the blackest judicial murders in history. Be it remembered, also, that Socrates was impugned as a corrupter of youth and as an opponent of religion; but eternity is not on the side of the religions which such as Socrates oppose.

After a long discussion about death and immortality, there entered to Socrates in prison the servant of the magistrates, bearing the fatal hemlock. The narrator continues:

"And at the same time ending his discourse, he drank the poison with exceeding facility and alacrity. And thus far, indeed, the greater part of us were tolerably well able to refrain from weeping; but when we saw him drinking, and that he had drunk it, we could no longer restrain our tears. But from me, indeed, notwithstanding the violence which I employed in checking them, they flowed abundantly; so that, covering myself with my mantle, I deplored my misfortune. I did not indeed weep for him, but for my own fortune; considering what an associate I should be deprived of. But Crito, who was not able to restrain his tears, was compelled to rise before me. And Apollodorus, who during the whole time prior to this had not ceased from weeping, then wept aloud with great bitterness; so that he infected all who were present, except Socrates. But Socrates, upon seeing this, exclaimed — What are you doing, excellent men? For, indeed, I principally sent away the women, lest they should produce a disturbance of this kind. For I have heard that it is proper to die joy-

fully and with propitious omens. Be quiet, therefore, and summon fortitude to your assistance.

"When we heard this we blushed, and restrained our tears. But he, when he found during his walking that his legs felt heavy, and had told us so, laid himself down in a supine position. For the man had ordered him to do so. And at the same time he who gave him the poison, touching him at intervals, considered his feet and legs. And after he had vehemently pressed his foot, he asked him if he felt it. But Socrates answered he did not. And after this he again pressed his thighs; and thus ascending with his hand, he showed us that he was cold and stiff. And Socrates also touched himself, and said, that when the poison reached his heart he should then leave us. But now his lower belly was almost cold, when uncovering his face (for he was covered) he said (which were his last words):

"'Crito, we owe a cock to Asclepius.[1] Discharge this debt, therefore, for me, and do not neglect it.'

"'It shall be done,' says Crito; 'but consider whether you have any other commands.' To this inquiry of Crito he made no reply; but shortly after moved himself, and the man uncovered him. And his eyes were fixed; which when Crito perceived, he closed his mouth and eyes. This, Echecrates, was the end of our associate; a man, as it appears to me, the best of the men of that time with whom we were acquainted, and, besides this, the most wise and just."

Thus we see how, in the very hour of its apparent defeat by the forces of false religion, true religion triumphed. And though Socrates was murdered, yet he lives; "he being dead yet speaketh." True religion enabled him utterly to con-

[1] The sacrifice paid on recovery from an illness.

quer and overthrow the worry and fear which his undeserved death and the apparent defeat of his ideas must otherwise have caused, and the fact that the account of his death will be read ten thousand years hence affords yet one more proof of the great doctrine which religion upholds and by which it triumphs over worry and pain and fear and even individual death — the doctrine that *no good can perish out of the world.*

A few centuries later the forces of false religion seemed to achieve a still more brutal and contemptuous triumph. It is recorded that at the darkest hour the faith of the Victim almost faltered in the cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Yet here also true religion triumphed. The Cross is raised on high, but where is the Roman eagle?

Throughout the centuries true religion has survived and done its beneficent work in its only citadel, the heart of man; true to its own great principle that the good cannot perish, true religion has never succumbed to external influences and has never been even in danger. When Copernicus upset the astronomical doctrines upon which the dogmas of theology were based, true religion was unhurt; and in our own day it has nothing to fear from Darwin:

> "Truth fails not, but her outward forms that bear
> The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
> That in the morning whitened hill and plain
> And is no more . . ."

There is some faith which does not fail and which, however its forms may change, no scientific discovery whatever can affect; what is this faith?

In the great book to which I have referred, Professor Höffding expresses the fundamental idea of true religion as *the conservation of values*. Students of science are familiar with such phrases as the conservation of energy and the conservation of matter. Höffding recognises as the perdurable and constant element, which persists in all the various forms of religion and throughout all their various changes, a belief in the conservation of values. To do justice to his thought would be to quote his book from end to end. The serious reader will long be grateful to me for directing his attention to it. Here I must merely attempt to express in my own words what he has taught me and so many others.

But in the first place let us observe an apparent contradiction; on the one hand we have the doctrine that the fear of things invisible is the seed of religion, whereas now we are speaking of religion as having an optimistic principle at the heart of it. It is evident that we are darkening counsel by means of the words we employ. When we employ one and the same term for true religion and for false religion, apparent contradiction is inevitable, just as the false Ptolemaic astronomy contradicts the true Copernican astronomy. Nevertheless from the first the idea of the persistence, the indestructi-

bility, the conservation of the good or the valuable — that which has value — has held a more or less definitely recognised place in religious systems, and the higher the religion the more clearly is this principle expressed. It has outlived the fear of the invisible.

We are all familiar with the noble poem of Browning, in which that poet's religious optimism reaches full expression. Some such description certainly might be applied to the poem "Prospice," but that was written to the poet's departed wife, and though it is essentially religious, yet the truth of it is a personal truth and it cannot be used for the conveyance of a general lesson. The poem of which I am thinking is "Abt Vogler." I am surprised that Professor Höffding has not quoted the poem which so consummately illustrates his own great doctrine. The musician, the reader remembers, has been extemporising upon his organ and has created Beauty, which is, of course, a form of the valuable. But he has ceased, and there remains no record of what was — "It is gone at last . . . and the good tears start." This distress at the apparent loss of that which has value constitutes the highest and noblest conceivable form of worry. All men in all ages have experienced it, and in deep natures it becomes a transcendent emotion. I have instanced one form of it by a quotation from a letter of Darwin in another chapter. Here in "Abt Vogler" is an illustration from the musician; there, where a mother mourns over

a lost child and asks herself the meaning of it all, is another illustration. The same emotion was aroused in those who watched the death of Socrates and in the women who knelt at the foot of the Cross. There is only one conceivable tragedy, and this is it.

If the reader desires to acquaint himself with the expression of this emotion in its most poetic form, let him read the first two-thirds of Shelley's poem "Adonais," where he mourns for John Keats, who "is gone where all things wise and fair descend."

But vital religion in all its forms believes in the conservation of values. Let me quote from the two poems I have named the expression of this faith: —

"There shall never be one lost good! . . .
All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good, shall exist;
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist,
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.
The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
Enough that he heard it once: we shall hear it by-and-by." [1]

Now with this let us contrast and compare, for the contrast teaches a profound truth, Shelley's expression of his faith in the conservation of values: —

[1] Cf. also Browning's "Apparent Failure."

"Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change unquenchably the same.

. . . . . .

He has outsoared the shadow of our night

. . . . . .

He is made one with Nature

. . . . . .

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely

. . . . . .

And he is gathered to the kings of thought
Who waged contention with their time's decay
And of the past are all that cannot pass away[1]

. . . . . .

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's shadows fly:
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity
Until Death tramples it to fragments."

All these lines lead up to the sublime peroration of the last two stanzas, which I need not quote.

I have cited two great expressions of the belief that there is something of the imperishable in all that is good; but what is the lesson of the contrast between those expressions, which may be described, in the language of philosophy, as theistic and pantheistic respectively?

[1] Cf. Wordsworth's expression of the same religious thought:—

"There is
One great society alone on earth:
The noble Living and the noble Dead."

It is the lesson of all religious history, — the lesson that so long as men vary religious conformity is as impossible as it is undesirable. This is a hard saying for the theologian and the dogmatist, who desires the aboriginal savage and the Teutonic metaphysician to repeat one and the same creed; but it is true nevertheless. Religion is a matter not of objective truth but of personal truth. If a man must express his religion truly he must be true to his own self; he will not then be false to any man nor yet to that man's religion. We see through a glass darkly — ay, even the philosophers amongst us. When we recognise that even the profoundest expression of the vital truths is only symbolical at best, we shall see that the philosopher is not so very much better off than the child, though this does not lessen the monstrous absurdity of asking the philosopher to express his faith in the same terms as the child.

It may be answered that the substance of this religious faith must stand the test of science, and there will be many to maintain that in these days science has made impossible, save at the cost of intellectual chastity, any form of belief in the conservation of value, the permanence of the good. This view has been abundantly refuted by Professor Höffding and others; but to state the grounds of that refutation here would involve a philosophic discussion which only with difficulty could be compressed into a hundred pages. I do not want the reader to take my

word for it that that has been done but to inquire for himself.

Whatever the form in which the doctrine of the permanence of the good be held, the result is triumphantly the same. When Spinoza's landlady began to have doubts about her religion, that mighty thinker and noble soul assured her that she would do well to hold to her faith. It effected for her, he knew, what his religion effected for him, yet probably no two forms of faith could vary more widely than hers and his. Blessed with this ultimate and final optimism, men and women in all times have, in a very real sense, conquered the world. All fears and worries and apprehensions and regrets and fretfulnesses vanish in the face of it. "The free man thinks of nothing less than of death," said Spinoza, whilst his own life proved how utterly true religion may triumph over the worries of daily life. He was cast off by his friends and co-religionists;[1] he earned a miserable livelihood by polishing lenses; he died of a cruel and chronic disease ere he had reached his prime; and the measure of his appreciation by his fellowmen may be inferred from the fact that his doctor celebrated his patient's death by promptly stealing his watch — yet the exultation of his words never fails and will never be found to fail their readers. It is utterly different in expression from Job's "though

[1] There is sufficient irony in this term: As if the religion of a Spinoza could ever be one and the same with the religion of those who expelled him from the Synagogue!

he slay me yet will I trust in him," whilst it is significant that both belonged to the race which has been endowed with a supreme genius for religion, and which no terrestrial circumstances have yet sufficed to crush — yet the underlying faith is one and the same. "To the good man," said Socrates, "no evil thing can happen."

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